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A STUDY OF THE MISSION OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH OF UPLAND:
"

HISTORICALLY, CURRENTLY, AND PROSPECTIVELY

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Theology

at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Franklin H. Littell has said, "The major problem before the churches in America is the achievement of self-understanding --more properly, the regaining of a consciousness of calling."¹ Such a statement applies not only to churches belonging to the major denominations but to the smaller churches of sectarian heritage as well. They have all been deeply affected by the rapid social changes which have been taking place in the last half century. The growth of large metropolitan areas, the advances of technology, the impact of automation, the increasing mobility of people--these along with the transformations in Biblical studies and theologies have changed the life of many churches. These changes are causing the churches to restudy their understandings of the world, the Christian faith, their style of life, and their mission in the world. Churches that have a strong non-English ethnic base have experienced additional tensions as they have had to adjust to a new culture, adopt a new language and address themselves to the challenge of other denominations. While these problems face the church as a whole, they are particularly acute for the pastor who is seeking to be alert to the important questions facing the church he strives

¹Franklin H. Littell, From State Church to Pluralism (New York: Doubleday, 1962), p. ix.

to serve.

In addition to the above problems, the pastor of a congregation with a sectarian heritage faces questions about the place of his church within the spectrum of denominations, the meaning and validity in the contemporary situation of the positions that occasioned the birth of the group, and the possibility of applying the current proposals for church renewal that are coming from persons of a variety of denominational backgrounds to his own circumstance. Out of this welter of problems any number of questions call for study. The one that appears most cogent and existential in nature is: What is the mission of a sectarian church in its community today? The particular church chosen for study is the one which the writer has been serving since 1962, the First Mennonite Church of Upland, California. This church was chosen for study because of the writer's involvement in the congregation, and because the question of mission appears to be an urgent one for the congregation. No previous studies of this nature have been made of this congregation, nor have any similar studies of any Mennonite congregation been done to the writer's knowledge. Thus this study should not only be of significance to the congregation as it seeks to determine the direction of its life in the future, but it should also be of interest to church historians and to Mennonite pastors who are facing similar questions.

I. THE PROBLEM

The First Mennonite Church of Upland, California, born out of a German sectarian tradition, has been experiencing many changes in the period of time since it was started in 1903. At the outset the members were citrus ranchers. Today this is a thing of the past and they are now engaged in a variety of occupations. German was the language of the church at its inception. Today it is rarely heard. The families of the church were frequently large. The children have grown up and for the most part have left the community. Mennonites used to come to Upland to settle, or to live for the winter. In recent years the numbers have declined. The church at its beginning thought of itself as a church distinctive from other churches in its relation to Christ and in faithfulness to the Bible teachings. This sense of distinctiveness has dissipated to a large extent. These changes bring to the foreground the question of the purpose or mission of the church. Thus the problem that has been selected for this study is the mission of the First Mennonite Church of Upland.

This church, with over sixty years of history, continues to be deeply affected by its past. With a large percentage of members having been affiliated with the church for forty years or more the history of the congregation has a decisive influence upon the way it continues to function. To propose a mission for the church it is necessary to know something about the history of

the congregation and to be aware of the dominant motivating forces in its life. Then the way the congregation thinks of itself is important if the most is going to be made of the strengths of the congregation and if the weaknesses are to be overcome. This is especially so in a church with a congregational polity. Such a church must determine its own mission and this it can do in the most adequate way if it is aware of its present assumptions. In the third place the makeup of the congregation will need to be surveyed, for this, too, determines the nature of mission. The strength of the members in terms of their age, sex, education, occupation and dedication to the uniqueness of their heritage become essential elements in the mission of a congregation. Finally, a Biblical base will need to be established upon which the other elements can be evaluated and future mission projected. These are the crucial questions that need to be answered in a study of the mission of the First Mennonite Church of Upland.

An important part of the question of the mission of a church is the nature of the community in which the church exists. This is especially true if the church conceives of its mission as being to the world. This is an area that is not covered in the present study but it is one that should engage the attention of the church as a continuation of the study undertaken here. Without such a study the proposals for mission are admittedly tentative and will need to be tested against a greater examination of the needs that might be uncovered as the church comes to

grips with the problem of their mission.

II. THE METHODOLOGY

To understand what the First Mennonite Church has thought its mission to be during the first sixty years of its life a study will be made of the historical documents of the congregation. These will include the various editions of the church constitution and the minutes of the congregational meetings, the church council, the Sunday school and the Christian Endeavor. The tool that will be used will be Scott Greer's suggestion that the purpose of any social group can be determined by the needs that a group fulfills, the roles that members perform, and the sanctions that are imposed.

To determine how the church views its mission at the present time a discussion of the question will be held with a representative group of church members. The group that has been chosen is the church council which is composed of twenty members plus the pastor. This group comprises over ten per cent of the congregation and is the body that is influencing the direction of the congregation.

To estimate the resources of the congregation for mission a study of the members' age-sex distribution, education, occupation, and place of residence will be made. Then since the First Mennonite Church stems from the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century, it is also important to determine to what extent the positions of the Anabaptists are still considered

normative by the members. A questionnaire has been formed of statements setting forth Anabaptist principles. The responses of the members will be analyzed by age groups to determine if there is any significant changes in the strength with which the principles are held.

Before making proposals for the future mission of the church, a normative statement on the nature and purpose of the Christian Church will be set forth to give a foundation and direction for such suggestions. Current biblical and theological understandings will be utilized for this statement. In the light of the foregoing studies proposals for the future mission of the church will be made.

Because the First Mennonite Church of Upland stands within the sectarian tradition of the Anabaptists, before entering into a study of the church preliminary studies will be presented on the Anabaptists and of sectarian theory along with summaries of a study of the General Conference Mennonite Church and of an essay on American religious sociology. These form a background which give important clues for understanding the problem under investigation.

III. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ANABAPTISTS

The Mennonite churches in America are a direct outgrowth of the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century. The Anabaptists, who are frequently designated as the "left-wing of the Reformation," sought a radical renewal of the church of their

day. It was their purpose to re-institute the church as it is portrayed in the New Testament for it was their conviction that it was impossible to re-form the existing church structures because they had deviated too far from the biblical norms.

The movement began in Switzerland in 1525 under the leadership of Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, and Georg Blaurock. Initially these men had been under the influence of Ulrich Zwingli, the pastor of Grossmünster in Zurich. They broke with Zwingli over two crucial issues. The first was the speed with which the reforms they were agreed upon should be instituted, and the second was whether they should wait for authorization from the town council of Zurich to initiate the reforms. Zwingli cautioned patience and held that the council should give approval for any changes. The three younger men (two were under thirty years of age) were zealous and impatient. They decided to put their beliefs into practice by baptizing each other. By this act they voluntarily separated themselves from the state church and formed a new and independent church.²

Simultaneously with the start of the movement in Switzerland a start was also made in Holland. This was led by two brothers, Obbe and Dirk Philips. A young priest in the Roman Catholic Church by the name of Menno Simons came under their influence and joined their group. Within a short time he was

²Fritz Blanke, Brothers in Christ, trans. Joseph Nordenhaug (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1961), pp. 7-20.

ordained as a minister to the Anabaptists and was soon looked upon as a prominent leader in the movement. The vigor of his leadership and the length of time he was able to serve led to his followers being called by his name. While they referred to themselves as "brethren" they have been known as Mennisten or Mennonites.

The Mennonites were orthodox in their faith accepting commonly held beliefs of the reformed churches relative to God, Christ, man, sin and salvation by grace. They differed sharply with the state churches in Switzerland and Holland, however, on the doctrines of the church and the sacraments and in how faith was to be manifested in life. It has been said of Menno Simons that "in the Scriptures he found the guide to a new life in Christ and the example of a true Christian Church. He felt that the New Testament was the only and unshakable ground on which the church should be built. It was also the guide for the life of the believers."³

The essentials of Anabaptist-Mennonite faith have been outlined in a definitive statement by Harold Bender in his Presidential address, "The Anabaptist Vision," before the American Society of Church History, December 1943. There are three constitutive elements that are basic. The first is that discipleship is the essence of Christianity. Inner faith is to

³Cornelius Krahn, "Menno Simons' Concept of the Church," in Cornelius J. Dyck, ed., A Legacy of Faith (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1962), p. 29.

be evidenced by a transformation in life. The second was voluntary church membership. A corollary of this was the insistence on the separation of the church from the world, or non-conformity to the worldly way of life. The third element was the ethic of love and nonresistance which was to be applied in all human relationships.⁴

Because these principles led the Anabaptists to advocate a way of life that was diametrically opposed to that of the established churches wherever they lived (both Roman Catholic and Reformed), they were vigorously persecuted. In many instances they were given the option of recanting from their faith, going into exile or forfeiting their lives. Large numbers went into exile for their faith and conservatively it has been estimated that more than four thousand men, women and children lost their lives in the first hundred years of the church's existence.⁵

The persecution of the Anabaptists brought two far reaching results. For one the church was scattered throughout much of Europe. This led to a rapid enlargement of the number of adherents to their faith as they proclaimed their faith wherever they went. However, as leaders were captured and put to death and survival for their followers became difficult the

⁴Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptist Vision," in Guy F. Hersberger, ed., The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1957), pp. 42-52.

⁵Paul Showalter, "Martyrs," The Mennonite Encyclopedia (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1957), III, 521-525.

movement was driven into seclusion. This led to the second consequence: the church was forced in upon itself so that it became a people limited in number, increasing mainly by growth from within. In many places they existed as small communities having a separate existence from the rest of society. In this condition they continued as a self-conscious, dedicated church group holding to the traditions of the fathers for two and three hundred years. C. Henry Smith, an American Mennonite historian, has characterized the Mennonites following the middle of the sixteenth century in the following manner:

By this time the fervid missionary zeal which had characterized the earlier spread of Anabaptism had been almost entirely stamped out by relentless persecution. Mennonites no longer had the heart to look for new recruits, only too glad to escape with their own lives, and thankful if they might hold their own. The growth of Mennonitism after this was rather the swarming of a people than the expansion of a faith.⁶

IV. CHURCH AND SECT

To understand the purpose and mission of a church it is necessary to know something about the nature of the church in contrast to other churches. We are helped at this point by a number of sociological studies that deal with the nature of the church. A major and pioneering work in this field is the study by Ernst Troeltsch in 1911 entitled Die Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen. In this study he differentiated

⁶C. Henry Smith, The Story of the Mennonites (Berne, Indiana: Mennonite Book Concern, 1941), p. 245.

three types within Christendom: church, sect and mystics.

The normative model for the church in Troeltsch's study was the medieval church of the thirteenth century. He defined "church" as

that type of organization which is overwhelmingly conservative, which to a certain extent accepts the secular order and dominates the masses; in principle, therefore, it is universal, i.e., it desires to cover the whole of humanity.⁷

The model used for the sect was the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century. By "sect" he defined the comparatively small groups who

aspire after personal inward perfection. . . , aim at a direct personal fellowship between members of each group . . . , and renounce the ideas of dominating the world.⁸

The "Spiritual Reformers" of the sixteenth century are the model for the "mystics." Mysticism is defined as a radical individualism that lays stress only upon the relations between the soul and God. Because of its emphasis upon spiritual experiences

this kind of religion becomes non-historical, formless, and purely individualistic. . . . Whatever organized forms it does adopt are loose and provisional, mere concessions to human frailty, without any sense of inward necessity and Divine inspiration.⁹

Only the first two categories of Troeltsch shall concern us here as we are seeking to define sociologically the nature of the Anabaptism in contrast to the group out of which it arose and not in terms of another movement that arose simultaneously.

⁷ Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches (New York: Macmillan, 1949), I, 331.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., II, 743.

The terminology that Troeltsch used is somewhat misleading as both of these types can rightly be called churches. Also the word "sect" has a negative schismatic connotation. Troeltsch himself faced the question of the appropriateness of his terminology. He saw both church and sect as legitimate expressions of tendencies resident within primitive Christianity.¹⁰ He is willing to say:

Very often in the so-called 'sects' it is precisely the essential elements of the Gospel which are fully expressed. . . . the sects, with their greater independence of the world, and their continual emphasis upon the original ideals of Christianity, often represent in a very direct and characteristic way the essential fundamental ideas of Christianity.¹¹

While it is unfortunate that Troeltsch gave the title "church" to one segment of the Church, he did not use "sect" in a pejorative sense. Even though the terminology is not appropriate nor proper on the popular level, it has a definite value on the scholarly level due to the way it has been used ever since the time of Troeltsch.

Following Troeltsch's analysis of church and sect we can set forth the following major characteristics:¹²

¹⁰Ibid., I, 333.

¹¹Ibid., p. 334.

¹²Ibid., pp. 331-343.

SECT

1. A voluntary community of faith.
2. Membership is by conversion.
3. Emphasis is on lay Christianity.
4. An intimate radical fellowship of love.
5. Lives a life of obedience to the Law of Christ.
6. Rejects the use of force, whether political, judicial or military.
7. Maintains an aggressive evangelistic emphasis and places converts in opposition to the world.
8. Practices a simple detachment from the world and is unaffected by society.
9. Leadership is based upon dedicated living and may devolve upon any member.
10. Congregational in polity.

CHURCH

1. The group is coterminous with society.
2. Membership is by birth and infant baptism.
3. Emphasis is on the priesthood.
4. A broad fellowship for the masses.
5. Lives by the objective impartation of grace through the Sacraments.
6. Sees the use of force as the way God has ordained for authorities to work.
7. Relies upon religious education and allows for degrees of capacity and maturity.
8. Views asceticism as a heroic special achievement of a few.
9. Leadership is vested in a priestly hierarchy with the authority of ordination.
10. Polity is monarchical or aristocratic.

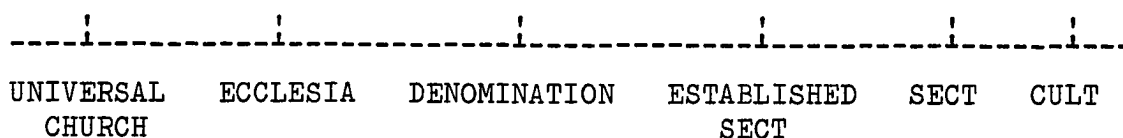
Troeltsch sought to outline the differences between the sect and the church as clearly as possible because he saw them as distinct sociological types with their own system of theology. Yet he was aware that "in actual life, of course, these different types mingle and combine with each other. . ."¹³

V. DEVELOPMENT IN SECTARIAN THEORY

The two-fold classification that Troeltsch used above has proven to be most helpful in understanding the church in pre-Reformation and Reformation times, but it has not proven

¹³Ibid., II, 995.

adequate to describe the growth and development of the church since then. The growth of religious liberty and the dis-establishment of state churches have tended to fuse his distinctions. More recent studies have suggested that instead of viewing these two definitions as separate entities they should be conceived as end points on a continuum with religious groups moving in one direction or the other. Also it is clear that the characteristics of the Anabaptists are not distinctive of all sects. Therefore J. Milton Yinger has refined the typology to include six positions along a continuum. The criteria that were chosen to project the continuum were "the degree of universality and degree of emphasis on social integration as compared with personal needs."¹⁴ The six positions as he has projected them are:



In brief, the universal church is represented by the medieval Catholic Church which was able to include all forms of Christianity in its embrace. The ecclesia stands for the established churches following the Reformation. It was less successful in incorporating the sect tendencies than the universal church. The denomination is still less successful in achieving universality. It is represented by the large

¹⁴J. Milton Yinger, Religion, Society and the Individual (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p. 150.

institutional churches which are frequently limited by class, racial and sometimes regional boundaries.

The next three types shall be treated in reverse order as they are derivatives of the cult even though they follow in the line indicated above when judged by the criteria of universality and degree of social integration. Yinger defines a cult as a religious group that is "small, short-lived, often local, frequently built around a dominant leader."¹⁵ Its beliefs and rites deviate quite widely from those that are traditional in a society. The sect is defined substantially in the terms that Troeltsch set forth. Yinger further divides sects into three categories: acceptance, aggression and avoidance sects. An acceptance sect is one that arises out of middle class concerns for problems that the dominant churches are not meeting. An aggression sect arises out of the lower classes whose major problem is poverty and powerlessness. For them Christianity is interpreted in radical-ethical terms. The avoidance sects despair of transforming society and so look for the solution of their problems in the hereafter. Yinger suggests that the Anabaptists are illustrative of an aggression sect. It would be wrong, however, to characterize the Anabaptists as a lower class movement as recent studies have shown.¹⁶

¹⁵Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁶Two recent doctoral dissertations have shown that persons from the various strata of society were Anabaptists: Paul Peachy, "Die Soziale Herkunft der Schweizer Taufer, 1525-

It is Yinger's position that acceptance sects and avoidance sects become denominations. The first because denominations are able to adopt their concerns. The second because they are not so much in conflict with society as indifferent to it. It is the aggression sect that is in conflict with the social order that becomes the established sect. The established sect is, therefore, one which at its inception had a concern for the evils of society. Examples of the established sects today are the Mennonites and the Quakers.

It is clear that no religious organization corresponds precisely to any of the types defined. Some denominations have sectarian elements while established sects may have many denominational elements. Because of this fact one student of sect groups has stated:

There is no religious organism in time or space that has evidenced a 'pure,' or 100 per cent, sectarian character. Thus it is folly to talk about sects. No church has ever been the 'true church,' but the irony is that we have always talked about the church with tongue in cheek, whereas we talk about sects as though they really existed. . . . Thus there is a sectarian trait in all religious organisms and there is the church trait in all.¹⁷

The above quotation should not be taken to mean that distinctions should not be drawn between religious groups, but it does warn us against reifying the characteristics that have

1540." (Ph.D. thesis, University of Zurich, Karlsruhe, 1954), and Peter James Klassen, "The Economics of Anabaptism, 1525-1560." (Ph.D. thesis, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1962).

¹⁷ Calvin Redekop, "The Sect From a New Perspective," The Mennonite Quarterly Review, XXXIX (July 1965), 216-217.

designated church and sect, dealing with them as if they form a single constellation. Wach, after setting forth the characteristics he observed in sects concluded, "Ultimately, it is the spirit and not any clear-cut overt manifestation which distinguishes the sect."¹⁸

VI. A STUDY OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH

In 1962 Leland Harder did a study of social change in the General Conference Mennonite Church of which the First Mennonite Church of Upland is a member. He set forth two characteristics which he suggests are typical of sectarian groups, namely: voluntarism in membership and separation from society.¹⁹ On the basis of these two characteristics he set forth a hypothesis by which he made his study. The hypothesis was that in a sect:

the voluntary aspect of its constitutive basis tends to give a conversionist character as it seeks to propagate its principles in society, thereby recruiting men and women for membership in the body of believers. The separatist aspect tends to give the sect an avoidance character as it seeks to divorce itself from societal evils. In their development, sects tend to sacrifice one of these values for the preservation of the other. As the voluntary basis for membership in the sect declines, it will tend to move in the direction

¹⁸ Joachim Wach, Sociology of Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 199.

¹⁹ Voluntarism is defined in Harder's study as not only the act of a member joining a group by personal commitment and conscious decision; it also includes the action of the receiving group that is seeking to maintain standards of admission. Separatism is defined as the distinction between the company of the committed and the rest of society. It may be maintained by special separation, i.e., isolation, or by behavioral rules that protect sect values, i.e., insulation.

of the folk society in which the sect becomes the church for its own cultural minority, i.e., the church and human society tend to coincide numerically. Or, if the voluntary basis for membership is held inviolable, the sect will undergo increasing encounter in the larger society at the expense of separation. In this case the alternatives are more complex, but two possible results of movement in this direction are offered. One is that the members of the sect become functionally intermingled with the members of society, and the sect continues to exist as one of a plurality of more-or-less voluntary organizations in varying degrees of accommodation to the secular social order. In the typology of Yinger, the sect becomes an established sect or a denomination, depending on the seriousness of the challenge that it continues to present to the secular order in keeping with its own explicit value commitment. The other alternative is that the sect retains the intensity of its original dissent in society and meets resultant conflict by sacrificing the ecclesiastical structures of a permanent religious group for a more transitory type of organization.²⁰

Most of the studies of the Mennonites have been based on the theory of acculturation as the basis for social change. These Harder believed have been inadequate because they have not seen the inner tensions within groups that also make for change. Using the concept of "structural disequilibrium," which he derives from a study by Godfrey and Monica Wilson,²¹ he has provided for an additional means of studying the changes that have taken place within the General Conference Mennonite Church. "Structural disequilibrium" is defined by Wilson and Wilson as "an opposition in the social structure itself over what that

²⁰Leland Harder, "The Quest for Equilibrium in an Established Sect: A Study of Social Change in the General Conference Mennonite Church" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, 1962), p. 32.

²¹Godfrey and Monica Wilson, The Analysis of Social Change (Cambridge: University Press, 1945).

structure is to become."²² This opposition is so inherent within the goals themselves that "men are divided against themselves as well as against their neighbours."²³ Accepting this concept Harder suggests that "the seed-bed of Mennonite disequilibrium is in the norms of Anabaptism themselves."²⁴

In his analysis of the General Conference Mennonite Church Harder concluded "that the General Conference was founded with a dual mission to evangelize the world and dissent from the ways of the world, and that both of these objectives were seen basically as parts of a unified world view."²⁵ He continues:

In their opposition to the world, various Mennonite branches have veered in one of two directions. Those branches which have moved in the direction of withdrawal have tended to abandon the sense of mission in the world. Several branches that have gone out in mission have tended to abandon any sense of opposition to the world. The General Conference Mennonite Church has wavered back and forth, but its main course has been to affirm both facets and to attempt to transpose the dilemma by a conscious, self-critical, and planned approach to social change.²⁶

In other words, the General Conference seeks to hold to the two essentials of a sect as Harder has proposed them, namely: voluntarism and separatism.

VII. HERBERG'S THESIS ON ACCULTURATION

Another study that will be helpful in understanding the experience of the First Mennonite Church of Upland is that of

²²Ibid., p. 125.

²³Ibid., p. 127.

²⁴Harder, Op. Cit., p. 105.

²⁵Ibid., p. 218.

²⁶Ibid., p. 219.

Will Herberg entitled, Protestant, Catholic and Jew.²⁷ In this monograph Herberg sets forth the thesis that the various religious groups in America have gone through three main stages in their search for identity. While broad generalizations are made that tend to by-pass the differences in religious groups as seen in the sectarian studies, there is sufficient application to the various religious groups that insights are gained that help one understand the acculturation process that took place.

From Herberg's study of a variety of groups it is his conviction that as immigrants came to America it was their desire to plant in America the same cultural, ethnic, and religious practices they had known in Europe. While in Europe these people had gained their self-identity through the villages in which they resided. Their customs, language and relationships all centered in the village in which they were born, reared and died. The majority of persons never traveling more than a few miles from home. Thus when they came to America, according to Herberg, "the church they were intent upon transplanting was their village church with all its ways; above all, with the old village customs and dialect."²⁸

As immigrants lived in America for a period of time they discovered that their village identification was no longer

²⁷Will Herberg, Protestant, Catholic, Jew (New York: Doubleday, 1960).

²⁸Ibid., p. 14.

meaningful. The residents of any one community may have come from several villages. Thus it was impossible for them to retain their identity through some village across the ocean. These people then turned to the next closest common bond-their ethnic background. The language and culture that people shared in common was held very dear and great efforts were made to utilize this as a means of self-identification. Herberg states,

immigrants found themselves drawn together by a larger affiliation the basis of which was the language that permitted them to communicate with each other. . . . An emphasis on language gradually outlined the new character of the immigrant groups and answered the aching question of identity.²⁹

The move to America was the source of this identification change.

As the process of acculturation continued the children of the second generation began to reject their identity through language. They found themselves having to learn English in the public schools and their cultural background tended to separate them from their neighbors. They wanted to enter into the mainstream of American life so as to take full advantage of the extraordinary mobility of American society. This mobility was not so much a matter of place of residence as it was status in life. The second generation was anxious, therefore, to rid itself of the burden of immigrant foreignness. This necessitated in many cases a break with their families. Says Herberg,

To them religion, along with the language of the home, seemed to be part and parcel of the immigrant baggage of foreignness they were so eager to abandon. To the dismay of their

²⁹Ibid., p. 14.

parents, and to the distaste of better acculturated Americans, many of the second generation tended to draw away from the religion of their fathers, and from religion altogether.³⁰

It was the third generation that returned to the church and to the faith of the grandfathers. Herberg quotes a statement by Marcus Hanson which has come to be known as Hanson's Law. It is, "what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember."³¹ The third generation does not wish to return to the language of his grandfather or to the other cultural patterns for he knows that this is impossible. The rise of the third generation meant the disappearance of the ethnic trappings of the past but it meant a revival of the ancestral religion. They looked for the inner reality that had been held by the shell of the old culture. They did not want the shell, but they sought for the kernel of faith that could give meaning to their lives. The search for this kernel led to a renewal of faith based on the rediscovered heart of the life of the immigrant.

The revival of ancestral religion in America has meant, according to Herberg, an erasing of many of the distinctions that separated groups in the past. The result is three major religious groups, Protestant, Catholic and Jew. He suggests, therefore, that for many Americans the current denominational systems are no longer of vital importance for the self-indentification of Americans as this is now established through one of the larger religious relationships. Herberg concludes,

³⁰Ibid., p. 19.

³¹Ibid., p. 30.

By and large, to be an American today means to be either a Protestant, a Catholic, or a Jew, because all other forms of self-identification and social location are either (like regional background) peripheral and obsolescent, or else (like ethnic diversity) subsumed under the broader head of religious community.³²

The thesis presented by Herberg is best taken as a broad generalization. It does not apply to every religious group nor to every congregation. The Amish of Anabaptist-Mennonite origin, for instance, have not rejected their German language nor their cultural heritage even though they have been in America for two hundred years. Also congregations, such as First Mennonite, have within it members in all of the stages outlined by Herberg since it contains persons who have immigrated from Europe even within the past decade. With these two qualifications Herberg's insights can be applied.

VIII. SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

The background study presented in this Introduction has been undertaken to understand the history of the Mennonites at their point of origin, the characteristics of sects, the General Conference Mennonite Church as an established sect, and the forces at work in immigrant religious groups. With these as a basis we have the means for greater understanding of the mission of the First Mennonite Church of Upland, past, present, and future.

³²Ibid., p. 40.

Chapter II will seek to set forth the mission of the First Mennonite Church of Upland as it has been manifested in the first sixty years of its existence. Chapter III will be an analysis of the current understanding of the congregation of its mission. Chapter IV will be a study of the present membership of the congregation to gain a fuller understanding of its make-up. Chapter V will present a normative statement of the mission of the church as seen through Biblical and theological studies. In the light of this suggestions will be made for the future mission of the First Mennonite Church.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE MISSION OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

The First Mennonite Church of Upland has been in existence since 1903. During these sixty years it has had a great variety of experiences that have shaped its present form. The basic assumption of this chapter is that to help a congregation determine its direction for the future it is necessary to know something about the purposes that have been instrumental in molding its life up to the present. If it is true that a person is the sum total of his past experiences, then the same can be said of a group that is made up of persons. Thus the purpose of this chapter is to seek to gain an understanding of the ways in which the First Mennonite Church has conceived its mission. We shall want to determine whether the purposes that compelled the formation of the church are essentially the ones that are still motivating the group. We shall also want to see if there are any of the distinctive sectarian emphases in this mission and how much they have shaped the life of the church. From such a study it will be possible to say where there are important gaps in the life of the church of which the congregation will need to be made aware if it is to be a true representative of the body of Christ.

The material for this study will be the historical documents of the congregation. These are the various editions of

the constitution of the congregation and the minutes of the meetings of the congregation, the council, Sunday School and Christian Endeavor. In studying such documents the right questions will need to be formed to obtain adequate answers for our problem. To help in this task we have relied upon the work of Scott A. Greer who has sought to determine how social groups can best be analyzed to determine their basic functions or purposes. In his monograph Social Organization he has set forth the theory that any social group has at least three conditions for existence. These are: (1) that the group must fulfill certain needs; (2) that in the attainment of these goals it sets up relationships between individual members resulting in roles and norms; and (3) that for the group to exist it must exercise control over the members.¹ Using this conceptual model we will analyze the history of the church to determine how its needs, roles and sanctions manifest the mission of the church.

I. THE FORMATION OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

The First Mennonite Church of Upland, California was organized on January 4, 1903, in the farm kitchen of the Heinrich Schmutz home in what is now Cucamonga. Signing the charter on that day were eighteen persons who had been meeting and worshipping together prior to this date. The first known Mennonite

¹Scott A. Greer, Social Organization (New York: Random House, 1955), pp. 18-28.

family to settle in the area of Upland was that of Henry Rees who had come from Hayesville, Ashland County, Ohio in 1887. During the 1890's a number of other Mennonite families moved into the community. Shortly after their arrival they began to have worship services in their homes. These were led by the Reverend Jacob J. Voth, a Mennonite minister, who had settled in Pasadena, and were held once a month. Also visiting the group and encouraging them to form a church was the Reverend J. B. Baer, Field Secretary of the Home Mission Board of the General Conference.²

In 1902 three families came from Oklahoma to reside in the community. One of these was the Reverend Michael M. Horsch. Reverend Horsch had served as a missionary to the Cheyenne Indians in Indian Territory for ten years under the General Conference Mennonite Church. Then due to the ill health of his wife he found it advantageous to come to California. With his coming plans for the organization of a church were set in motion. A Sunday School was organized on December 7, 1902, in the Wilhelm Harms home. This was a month prior to the organization of the church.

Joining the church when it was organized were: Reverend Michael and Tillie (Dettweiler) Horsch; Heinrich and Christina (Schmutz) Schmutz; Edward and Maria (Bergman) Haury; Louis and

²A history of the first sixty years of the congregation's life has been printed. Ella Schmidt, History of the First Mennonite Church, Upland, California, 1903-1963 (North Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Press, 1965).

Christina (Hirschler) Ledig; Adolph and Katie (Baer) Ledig; Henry and Bertha (Ruth) Ledig; Wilhelm and Maria (Unruh) Harms; Henry and Ella (Heckman) Rees; Peter Haury; and Ben Kuehny.

There were close relationships between several of the above families. The first three had worked together among the Indians in Oklahoma. The three Ledig men were brothers. Peter Haury was reared by the Gerhard Ledig family and Ben Kuehny came to California from Iowa, the former home of the Ledigs.

Of the eighteen members, all had been baptized into the Mennonite Church prior to their coming to California and all had parents who were Mennonites. Of the eighteen, six were born abroad in either Germany, West Prussia, or Russia. The parents of the remainder had immigrated from Germany and Alsace Lorraine in the latter half of the 1800's.

Having observed how these people formed an organization for religious purposes, we shall now seek to ascertain what the purposes were that the group sought to fulfill through the church.

II. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH SEEN THROUGH ITS NEEDS

A group has been defined by Greer as "an aggregate of people in a state of functional interdependence."³ By functional interdependence he means that each member of the group is dependent upon one another and that all are dependent upon the

³Greer, Op. Cit., p. 18.

group for filling certain needs. The question we are seeking to answer is: What are the needs that were fulfilled by the organization of the First Mennonite Church? The congregation at its organization did not set down its purposes or mission. The first constitution that was drawn up does not speak to the question. It appears that the congregation assumed that everyone knew what it was they were seeking to accomplish. But it is likely that they were not aware of all the needs that they were fulfilling, at least they were not put down in writing. Because of this we will need to observe what the congregation did and come to conclusions on the basis of the clues given.

The Need to Worship

It is obvious from the fact that a church was formed that the people had religious concerns. They began meeting weekly on Sunday morning in their homes for worship. Worship consisted in the singing of hymns, the reading of the Bible, prayer, a sermon, and the taking of an offering for religious activities. The same group of people met for an hour of Bible study in a Sunday School prior to the worship service. As soon as they were able to rent a building in Upland, they began to have a Christian Endeavor program along with a second preaching service on Sunday evening. A prayer meeting was organized for Wednesday evening. These programs were all continued through the first sixty years of the congregation's life with varying degrees of interest.

Although no mention is made of the regular services of

the congregation in any of the constitutions until 1946, an article was given in the first constitution to Baptism and Holy Communion. Baptism is mentioned only in passing as the means by which young people are to be received into the church upon the confession of faith. The constitution of 1903 stipulates, "The Holy Communion shall be observed not less than two times annually."⁴ By 1910 this had been changed to four times annually. They both state, "Every member is urged not to stay away from the Lord's Supper without very valid reasons."⁵ The seriousness with which they took their religious observances is seen in that statement.

From the large amount of time given to these religious activities one can conclude that faith was a central organizing principle of their lives and that there was a deep felt need to relate to God. The church believed that without faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord that a person would be eternally separated from God. The Catechism used by the congregation in the 1930's asked the question, "What shall be the portion of the believers?"⁶ The answer was in part, "They will enter into

⁴Translated from Gemeinderordnung der 1. Mennoniten Gemeinde in Upland, California. (Newton, Kansas: Volksblatt Druck), 1906.

⁵Quotations from constitutions and minutes will refer to the date in the body of the text and so will not be duplicated in footnotes.

⁶A Catechism or Brief Lessons from the Holy Scriptures (Berne, Indiana: Mennonite Book Concern, Revised 1934), p. 62.

eternal life, and be acquitted of all sin and are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple . . ."

The next question was, "What will be the fate of the ungodly?"

The answer - "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

That this belief was taken seriously by members of the church was disclosed by a currently inactive member. This person told of the faith of her father and how his belief in hell repelled her. She also felt that this was a dominant belief in the church. Thus it was with seriousness that the congregation gathered to worship God. In more recent years there has been more emphasis placed upon life here on earth and Christian faith as a way of life rather than a preparation for heaven in the hereafter. Well prepared sermons that apply to the issues of life have been most appreciated.

The constitution of 1946 finally gave a purpose for the existence of the congregation.

Acknowledging Jesus Christ to be our Saviour and Lord, and accepting the Bible as our rule of faith and practice; our purpose is to unite ourselves for Christian fellowship; to build God's Kingdom at home and abroad; to nurture the spiritual life of all members through public worship, through administration of Sacraments, religious instruction and such other activities as are needful.

The purpose as stated above is not unique with the church. It is almost identical with one given in the constitution of the First Mennonite Church of Hillsboro, Kansas, which was printed in 1939. Having no centralized authority, Mennonite Churches frequently studied the constitutions of other congregations for ideas that

might help them in the formulation of their statements. In this statement there is nothing that can be said to be distinctively Mennonite. The congregational base of the church is, of course, different from many denominations, but it is also similar to a number of others. In the need to worship God we do not find a purpose that should set the Mennonite Church off from others in the community.

The Need to Train Their Children

Believing that faith is necessary for salvation, the church had a deep concern for their children. This is seen from the fact that a Sunday School was organized at the beginning of the life of the church. The fact that the Sunday School was organized a month prior to the organization of the church may point to a feeling that this was one of the basic reasons for organizing the church. In both the Sunday School and church constitutions Biblical instruction is seen as most important.

The Sunday School constitution gives as its purpose: "Bible study, prayer, and singing."⁷ Article 4 of the church's 1906 constitution is entitled "Biblical Instruction" and reads,

The youth of the church shall receive a proper Biblical training. To this end the youth shall be taught the doctrine of salvation and Biblical truth that they shall have the opportunity to make a decision for Christ and through Holy Baptism become a member of the church.

The constitution as it was revised in 1929 rewrote the above article but kept the essence of it. Now they said,

⁷Translated from the German Minute Book of the Sunday School.

The primary purpose of this instruction is to lead young people to a knowledge of salvation which shall find expression in their confession of faith and baptism.

Subsequent revisions, namely the one of 1946 and 1959 did not retain any provision for such training. It may have been thought that since such training was done through the Sunday School that this was an unnecessary article in the church constitution. The Sunday School remained a separate organization from the church, with its own Annual Meeting and officers, during the first sixty years of its life. This was generally never seen as a problem as the members of the Sunday School were also members of the church.

The concern manifested in the establishment of the Sunday School reflects a common prevailing interest in churches of every denomination and many of the sects. The General Conference Mennonite Church began publishing material for the Sunday Schools as early as 1887.⁸ The American Sunday School Union had set forth the goal of establishing a Sunday School "in every place in the west"⁹ by 1839. The First Mennonite Church, therefore, reveals the influence of the religious practices of the American culture by the way in which they organized their religious concerns.

Further evidence of the congregation's concern for the

⁸Harold S. Bender, "Sunday School Literature," The Mennonite Encyclopedia (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: The Mennonite Publishing House, 1959) IV, 661.

⁹Harold S. Bender, "Sunday School," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, IV, 657.

faith of their children comes from the minutes of the first Annual Meeting of the congregation, held January 3, 1904. Minute 9 records,

After a discussion about a German school an election was held for a school committee. The results of the election-- Bros. H. G. Ledig, G. G. Isaac, and J. A. Haury. A motion was made and carried that the school problem be left entirely up to this committee.

The content of the curriculum of this school was the Bible. The school was held for four to eight weeks each summer.

On December 27, 1911, the Reverend Horsch reported to the Annual Meeting of the church. The minutes state,

Brother Horsch as teacher of the German School reported that he held classes from July 3 to Aug. 23. He had 37 pupils--of these 6 were not from our church. The aim of the teaching was Biblical interest.

The last report of the German school was given December 27, 1916. The minutes record that Helen Haury reported on the school, then "the motion was made and accepted to have German school again as usual." It was left to the trustees to decide the place, time and teacher. However, the anti-German pressure from the first World War was so intense that the German school had to be discontinued. The school was not continued in English but the Pastor would instruct the children three times a week for certain periods.

Over the years the children of the congregation have continued to be taught in Sunday School and until 1955 on Sunday evenings in the Christian Endeavor program. Beginning in the 1920's a Vacation Bible School has been held for a two week

period. These activities show a continuing concern for the faith of the children. This concern has not been narrowly conceived although it has broadened in the past few decades. In 1954 a Board of Christian education was formed which was given the task of overseeing the total education program of the church. This Board drew up a full page of objectives for their task. The following are the major items:

Christian education seeks to foster in growing persons an understanding of and fellowship with God as Creator, Ruler, and Father, the supreme reality in daily experience, and the only true center of life.

To develop such an understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as will lead to experience of Him as Savior and Lord, loyalty to Him and His cause, and will manifest itself in daily life and conduct.

To foster an understanding of the Christian faith and its relation to all areas of living, the development of Christian character which recognizes the worth of every person and consideration for the welfare of others, and fosters a creative response to Jesus Christ expressed in repentance, conversion, and discipleship. To develop the desire and ability to fulfill the Great Commission in bringing the unchurched both in Upland and abroad to a confession of faith in Jesus Christ and membership in His Church through our total program of worship, visitation, missions, voluntary service, relief work, support of our conference colleges and seminary. To develop the desire and ability to think and act upon our faith in Jesus Christ in relation to racial, economic, political, and international life.¹⁰

In its concern for the education of the children of the congregation the First Mennonite Church shows the characteristics of an established sect. While the quotation above includes fulfilling the Great Commission, thus far the congregation has made

¹⁰ Taken from "Objectives of the Christian Education Program of the First Mennonite Church." (Mimeographed, 1954).

the training of their children one of the major endeavors of the church. The church differs from the denominations in that it expects the children to make a commitment of faith at a more mature level. Those who joined the church by baptism in the early years varied in age from thirteen to twenty, with the average being about sixteen. While the intent has been to have a membership of committed persons, in practice all of the children have become members which raises some questions about the nature of the commitment. In actual practice there is not much difference between an established sect and a denomination in the way children are reared and brought into the church. Having seen the program of the church in the area of education, we shall now compare its program of evangelism.

The Need for Fulfilling the Great Commission

The Mennonite Church in Europe at its beginning was strongly evangelistic. But as we have seen, they were soon driven into seclusion by persecution. Within the freedom of America and of the west the First Mennonite Church of Upland faced quite a different situation. One may have anticipated that since the first pastor, Reverend Horsch, had served as a missionary to the Cheyenne Indians for ten years that the church would have shown an aggressiveness in evangelism. But this is not apparent. There is no statement in the first constitutions that shows any awareness of the Great Commission. During the first year of the congregation's life a Women's Missionary Society was

formed but their interest was in foreign missions. It was not until 1946 that the constitution made any statement about outreach and then it said in very general terms that it is one of the purposes of the congregation to "build God's Kingdom at home and abroad."

This does not mean that the church had no concern for persons who were not affiliated with their church. As we have seen in the annual report of 1911 the Pastor stated that six children from the community were attending the German school during the summer. This is evidence that they were at least relating to persons in the community who had a German background.

The church's position that persons should be baptized upon their confession of faith must have placed a barrier before persons who had been baptized as infants. The first constitution explicitly stated, "Every person who is baptized on their confession of faith in Jesus Christ as their only Lord and Savior and who otherwise leads a Christian life can become a member in full standing in the church." The article goes on to say, "Every person who is a member of another Church and who desires to become a member shall present a certificate of membership from his home congregation." By 1929 the wording of the latter statement was changed to "members of other Mennonite churches" to unify the position and possibly make it stronger. In this situation a stronger statement seems to point to a weakening of the position. In the second year of the congregation the Herman Eyemann family moved into the community from Kansas. Mr. and

Mrs. Eyemann were both members of a Mennonite Church in Kansas, but Mrs. Eyemann had only been baptized as a child. Thus while she did not qualify for membership under the first stipulation for membership, she did according to the second. Both husband and wife were received by transfer of letter. Mrs. Katie Habegger, a member of the church since 1904 remembers hearing the Pastor saying that he was glad that Mrs. Eyemann had joined a Mennonite Church in Kansas for he would not have known what to do.

The church did make contact with some persons not of Mennonite background. In 1908 Emil and Amanda Tishler were baptized upon their confession of faith and received into the church. They were German speaking people of Lutheran background. At the time of their baptism Mr. Tischler was sixty years of age and Mrs. Tischler was fifty-four. Subsequently several of their children also joined through baptism.

By 1910 the congregation was ready to make exceptions to the rule that all persons should be baptized as adults. The revision of the constitution of that year added, "Exceptions to the first clause of this article shall be decided upon by the church." It is not known if this exception was made for any person in particular or upon general principles. But in 1911 two women who were married to Mennonite men joined the church. One had joined a Mennonite church in the east previous to coming to California but the other had not. This exception was not used again for another ten years. On that occasion Mr. Albert

Roeben, a Lutheran who had married a sister of the Pastor's wife applied for membership without being rebaptized. There is a record of this exception in the minutes of the congregation. At a meeting of the congregation held on April 28, 1920, it was reported, "Mr. Roeben being a member of the Lutheran Church baptized in infancy expressed the desire not to be baptized again which was accepted by nearly all members present." The exception was now clearly established and it became the rule in 1929 when the constitution was revised to say,

Mature Christians who have been baptized as infants and who desire to become regular members may be received. The church requests them to be baptized on confession of faith, but does not insist upon this. If they are received without baptism, the church still requires that they henceforth recognize baptism upon confession of faith, and all the other tenents as set forth herein."

Over the years the church has reached out to a variety of persons. Particular mention should be made of their concern for refugees. Following World War II several Estonian families were placed in a camp at the outskirts of Upland. Several members of the congregation took an interest in their plight and assisted them in various ways. They were brought to the church to worship and in 1950 the Herbert Ruetmann family joined the church. In 1956 the church sponsored the Douwe Nauta family who were Dutch refugees from Indonesia. This family also joined the church in 1957. Following the break between the United States and Cuba the National Council of Churches appealed to congregations across America to take refugees to their communities. The First Mennonite Church accepted the challenge and brought the Sergio

Alvarez family to Upland. This family resided in Upland for a year then they moved to Pasadena where other relatives were living.

During the first sixty years of its history the First Mennonite Church of Upland has received a total of 100 persons of non-Mennonite parentage as members out of a total of 907 who had become members. (See Appendix A.) Of this number almost half joined because they were married to a member. The following table shows by decades the number of persons of non-Mennonite parentage who were received as members and the number who were married to a Mennonite member and the number who were not. The church had the most difficulty in gaining members from the community during the first two decades. From 1903 to 1922 a total of eleven non-Mennonites joined the church of which only three were not married to a member of the congregation. It needs to be recognized that the population in the early years was much smaller in number than at present. In 1910 there were approximately 1,500 persons in the Upland area. By 1960 there were 15,918.

TABLE I
NUMBER OF PERSONS OF NON-MENNONITE PARENTAGE
RECEIVED AS MEMBERS BY DECADES

Decade	Number received	Number married to a Mennonite	Number unrelated
1903-1912	5	3	2
1913-1922	6	5	1
1923-1932	13	8	5
1933-1942	26	7	19
1943-1952	26	13	13
1953-1962	24	11	13
Totals	100	47	53

Part of the fulfillment of the Great Commission is in mission work abroad. The First Mennonite Church has always given strong support to the mission program of the General Conference. In 1911 out of a total expenditure of \$2,747.76 they gave \$1,120.50 to work outside the local church and of this amount \$350.50 was given to missions. Over the years the congregation has consistently given about thirty per cent of their budget to projects outside the community.

Another gauge of a congregation's interest in mission work is the number of members who have gone into that type of work. Four members have served as missionaries. The Reverend and Mrs. Alfred Wiebe served as missionaries to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians in Oklahoma from 1947 to 1959. The Reverend Samuel Monroe Hess worked along the Pacific Coast in various logging camps where he started Sunday Schools and churches. He began working in 1935 and has continued in this type of work

until the present time. Leonard Wiebe, the son of Alfred Wiebe served as a missionary to the Hopi Indians from 1945-1952 in Arizona. Three members of the church served in foreign countries in relief work under the Mennonite Central Committee for shorter periods of time. These were Henry Buller, Ella Schmidt and Bruce Boshart. Besides these there were two men who were members of the church in their youth who entered the ministry. They are Hugh Hostettler and Heinz Janzen. While the number of persons serving as missionaries and ministers is not great, there was a live interest among a number of the members as can be seen by this account.

One of the major characteristics of a sect is that it upholds the principle of voluntary membership. First Mennonite has struggled to perpetuate this standard, both for the children of the congregation and for those joining from the community. While it was willing to compromise on the requirement that all persons should be baptized as adults, they have never compromised on the principle of voluntary membership. Children have never been considered members of the church until they made a profession of faith and were baptized upon that confession of faith. The age of baptism has never gone below that of twelve years of age. For about the past twelve years members joining the church have been requested to write out a statement of faith which is read to the congregation.

If one defines a denomination as churches that are fairly inclusive of the persons in the community, First Mennonite Church

does not qualify for the title. It has been more concerned about bringing its own children into the household of faith than it has about including others. In this way First Mennonite fits the definition of an established sect. Its mission has been to a large extent to keep its own children within the Mennonite fold.

The Need to be a Mennonite Church

The congregation at the outset wanted to form a Mennonite Church. When they were organized they gave themselves the name, "Die Erste Sud-California Mennoniten Gemeinde, bei Cucamonga, California." When they began meeting in Upland and erected a house of worship it was changed to "Die Erste Mennoniten Gemeinde in Upland, California." As has been stated, all of the first members of the church had been Mennonites. During the first twenty years of its life the congregation was almost totally made up of persons of Mennonite parentage.

The church has maintained its identity by affiliation with the larger Mennonite bodies. In 1904 the church became a member of the Pacific District Conference and in 1908 a member of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Both the Pacific District Conference and the General Conference are formed by the member church and the delegates to the conferences are chosen by the congregation. The Upland church has always been represented at these conferences. The minister has been sent with his way paid while other delegates pay their own way. The programs of the

conferences have been supported financially and members of the congregation have exercised leadership in them. The Pastors of the congregation have served in the following capacities over the years:

Reverend Michael M. Horsch, pastor 1903-1915; 1918-1926
 President of the Pacific District Conference for ten years
 Member of General Conference Home Mission Board, 1908-1917
 Member of General Conference Foreign Mission Board, 1917-1941
 Traveling Secretary for the Mission Boards, 1915-1917

Reverend Lester Hostetler, pastor 1927-1929; 1933-1941
 Church Unity Committee of General Conference, 1929-1938
 Member of the General Conference Board of Education, 1935-1944
 Member of Board of Directors of Witmarsum Seminary, 1927-1932
 Member of Business Committee of Pacific District Conference, 1940-1941

Reverend A. J. Neuenschwander, pastor 1929-1933
 Vice President of the General Conference, 1926-1933
 General Conference Peace Committee, 1926-1938

Reverend Earl Salzman, pastor 1941-1951
 Vice President of Pacific District Conference, 1942-1943
 Business Committee of Pacific District Conference, 1945-1947

Reverend Paul Goering, pastor 1953-1960
 Pacific District Christian Service Committee, 1956-1960

Members of the congregation have also held office in the conferences.

Lucas Horsch
 Member of Peace Committee of General Conference, 1932-1950
 Member of Pacific District Peace Committee, 1942-1950

Mrs. Vinora Salzman
 President of the Pacific District Women's Missionary Association, 1945

Mrs. Grace Boshart
 District Advisor of Women's Missionary Association, 1951

The Upland congregation also fulfilled its duties by being the host to the Pacific District Conference in 1907, 1912, 1919, 1927, 1935, 1949, 1956 and 1966. It also served as co-host with the Immanuel Mennonite Church of Los Angeles for the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session in 1935.

Other evidence for the congregation's concern to be a Mennonite Church is seen in its use of the various publications of the General Conference, namely: The Mennonite Hymnary, the Sunday School material published by the Conference, and the placing of the denomination's paper, "The Mennonite," in every home.

These are the more formal, organizational aspects of being a Mennonite Church. More important than these would be the degree to which the church holds to distinctive Mennonite doctrines. We have seen that the three characteristics of the Anabaptists' faith were discipleship, voluntary membership, and nonresistance. What discipleship meant to the congregation we will see when we speak of the norms of the congregation, and we have already seen how the congregation has sought to uphold voluntary membership. So we examine the way the church has held to the position of nonresistance.

The Need to be Nonresistant

By its literal interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount the Anabaptists concluded that they should never participate in warfare and that they should be nonresistant in the face of evil.

This position was maintained with varying success in Europe. Very frequently it was the desire to escape military conscription that brought Mennonites to America. Several members of First Mennonite are descendants of those who came to the states from south Germany around 1850. A biography of one who made this trip as a young man tells of the reasons for their move.

From America came letters from Uncle Eymann and others. These and the hours with Uncle Leisy (who had been to America) gave us a vision of the opportunities and freedom of the new country. It kindled in us a desire for these fleshpots and for this equality in human rights. Soon a circumstance arose which caused us to break with the old order. My oldest brother Jacob was drafted into the army, and there were five more sons, all destined to become soldiers. Bavaria permitted substitution, but my father could not afford that for all of us. Moreover, he did not want his sons to be soldiers because of his convictions on nonresistance. He decided to sell everything and move to America.¹¹

The First World War faced the church with a real trial of its faith. While the members of the church had become naturalized citizens of the United States, their German origin, their German names, and the use of the German language in the services of the church, made the community look upon them with disfavor. This along with the nonresistant position of the church set them apart from the community. Six men from the congregation were drafted. Five of them accepted non-combatant status in the army and one went into regular service. Of the five who entered as non-combatants, one transferred into the regular service while one was put in prison for his refusal to obey orders that were

¹¹ Christian Krehbiel, Prairie Pioneer (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1961), p. 21.

intended to get him to participate in more combatant activities. To show their patriotism the church placed a flag in the church house with a star on it for each of the boys in service. The pastor did not emphasize the non-combatant position but let the boys take whatever stand they felt was right. He himself was under pressure in the community for he purchased war bonds with borrowed money according to his son. One of the members of the congregation has his house splashed with yellow paint because of his suspected leanings.

One evaluation of the total Mennonite Church's response in general to the First World War states,

The various Mennonite groups demonstrated varying degrees of loyalty to the principle of nonresistance; but the large majority of the conscripted Mennonites refused service of any kind under the military. They were genuine nonresistants. A substantial minority accepted noncombatant service, while a few accepted combatant service.¹²

According to this standard the men at First Mennonite Church were not fully nonresistant. Only one of the six refused to be a part of the military.

Following World War II there seemed to be an awareness on the part of some members that they were departing from positions held by the Mennonites in general. This manifested itself as a concern for the minutes of the Executive Committee of the Senior Christian Endeavor for an unknown month and day in 1920 record the following: "It was moved, seconded and carried that the

¹²Guy F. Herschberger, War, Peace, and Nonresistance (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1944), p. 119.

pastor of the church be asked to give a series of talks on Mennonite doctrines at the evening services in the near future." It was also "moved, seconded and carried that the Library Committee of the Sunday School purchase a book of History of Mennonite Doctrine and any other books they see fit along this same subject."

In spite of this concern, the Second World War found the congregation in an even weaker position. The Selective Training and Service Act became a law on September 16, 1940. At the Annual Meeting of the congregation on January 15, 1941 Reverend Hostetler recommended,

It is my belief that we should study carefully the problem of war and peace, especially since we find our historic doctrine once more challenged by a world at war. We should do all we can to clear our own thinking, to maintain a thoroughly Christian attitude towards those who would ridicule or persecute us, and to seek to help our young men called in the draft to find their way to a positive and constructive testimony for peace. It is a tremendous problem and we should apply ourselves diligently to its solution.

Reverend Hostetler left the church in July and there is no evidence that the study he proposed was undertaken. His successor, the Reverend Earl Salzman did not take as forthright a position although he probably leaned toward the nonresistant position personally. Even though there were members who were conscientious objectors to participation in war, there was only one boy in the congregation who served in the Civilian Public Service camps. All the rest of the boys subject to the draft served in the military. The church supported the Civilian Public Service camps financially during the war and one of the

members served on a provisions committee for one of the camps located near by. The general tenor of the congregation was support for the war effort. Much Red Cross work was done. Committees were organized to act in case of emergency. One of the ladies of the church was appointed a general chairman and under her there were four captains and six lieutenants.

The First Mennonite Church was not alone in the direction of her stand. At the height of the war the churches of the Pacific District Conference had only 15.9 per cent of the boys willing to choose alternative service over against service in the military.¹³ At a conference called to discuss the denomination's peace witness in 1953 one speaker said,

The past fifty years has seen increasing unwillingness to assume a conscious sense of conflict between the church and the world; a rejection, in other words, of the Anabaptist doctrine of the church in favor of greater identification with the community.¹⁴

Since World War II the situation in the congregation has not greatly changed. There has been only one boy who has served as a conscientious objector, and this was during the Korean conflict. But there does seem to be some re-evaluation. Reverend Paul Goering, who served the church as pastor from

¹³Leland Harder, "The Quest for Equilibrium in an Established Sect: A Study of Social Change in the General Conference Mennonite Church" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, 1962), p. 324.

¹⁴Donovan E. Smucker, "Statement of Our Problem," The Church, The Gospel and War (Newton, Kansas: Board of Christian Service, 1953), p. D-3 (Mimeographed).

1953-1960 was a staunch pacifist. He had served as a conscientious objector during the war and in the National Service Board for Religious Objectors' office in Washington, D. C. Upon his recommendation the church, together with the Seventh Street Mennonite Church and the Brethren in Christ church took action on June 7, 1954 to sponsor a full page ad in the Ontario Daily Report opposing the use of atomic bombs. That the congregation was willing to identify itself with other historic peace churches in sponsoring such an ad at least indicates that they were not ready to completely reject their heritage. It also seems to indicate an openness to evaluate current issues in the light of the past heritage.

In his study of the General Conference Mennonite Church Harder presents two conclusions relative to the historic non-resistance position.

Congregations which are known to have cultivated and cherished the norm of nonresistance have a high proportion of conscientious objector representation. Congregations which are known to have become imitative of modern Protestantism in theology and ethics have produced relatively few conscientious objectors. The presence or absence of a viable discipline in the congregation was directly related to the presence or absence of overt conscientious objection.¹⁵

It would appear that the more urban a Mennonite congregation, the less likely a member to register as a war dissenter.¹⁶

It appears that the First Mennonite Church existing as a relatively small congregation in a community that was becoming increasing urbanized found it difficult to maintain the position

¹⁵Harder, Op. Cit., p. 328.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 330.

of nonresistance. This along with the fact that during both wars the church was led by ministers who did not take a strong stand on the issue, made it easy for the members to compromise than stand. To the two conclusions given by Harder a third could be added. It would be that the more isolated or removed from other Mennonite Churches, the more likely it is for the church to have difficulty remaining non resistant. The churches in the Pacific District Conference, of which there were only six in all of California, all had a more difficult time maintaining the non-resistant position than did those churches that were located in a larger Mennonite Community.

It is clear that the First Mennonite Church had less need to hold to the nonresistant position espoused by the Anabaptists in later years than they did at the outset. This trend may be interpreted as the results of the assimilation of the sectarian church into the larger society, or possibly the secularization of the church. It may also be that the congregation was following the pattern that Herberg saw in his study of immigrant groups. He saw the second generation of the various religious groups rejecting not only the culture of their immigrant parents, but also their faith. But in the third generation of these groups he saw a return to the faith of the forefathers stripped of its previous cultural encumbrances. There is some evidence that there is a trend within the First Mennonite Church to return to the Anabaptist position on ethics. This we will observe in Chapter IV.

The Need to be Identified With the Community

Herberg's thesis is that immigrant religious groups coming to America sought to establish their identity by becoming enclaves of a specific culture and language. Their ethnic ties were deeply meaningful. This we observe in the First Mennonite Church when it was established. All of the eighteen charter members had a German background and several families had come directly from Europe. All of the families used the German language in their homes. The services of the church were all held in German. During the second year of the congregation's life a German school was started for the children that was held each summer through 1916.

In the first years it was not too difficult for the congregation to maintain their German identity. They lived a relatively isolated life in a close-knit farming community. But the tide was against them. The children were sent to the public schools and there they learned to speak English. Their business dealings all were in English for it was several years before any of the Mennonites engaged in business as a means of livelihood. It is interesting to note that the minutes of the congregation are recorded in German until 1919. However the minutes for February 7, 1906 are in English. The meeting on that date was for the purpose of incorporating the church for the purpose of holding property.

The forces for change and for a greater identity with the community were present quite early within the church. G. P.

Ledig was one of the early settlers who was influential in getting the congregation organized. His wife died and for a second wife he chose an English speaking woman who was a member of the Church of the Nazarene. He never joined the Mennonite Church. Also in the early years a Mennonite family (Mehl) moved into the community from Ohio. While the children knew German they preferred to speak English and they rebelled at listening to the German services each Sunday. Even though their father was a minister the children began to attend the Methodist Church and later joined there. As early as 1912 there were some in the congregation who questioned the advisability of continuing the German school for the children. The minutes of the congregational meeting of December 26, 1912 record, "The question of whether we want to have German school at all was discussed and it was decided to have German school as before."

The question of whether German should be retained as the language of the church was being discussed in the larger body of the General Conference from the beginning of the century. As early as 1899 the president of the General Conference, Reverend A. S. Shelly, (who served as the pastor of the First Mennonite Church of Upland from 1915-1917) wrote in The Mennonite,

Our Conference wants to perpetuate itself. Its aim is to bring about unity and concert of action among Mennonite people. Its vital principle is the carrying on of mission work. Every obstacle in the way of the furtherance of these objects must be removed with an unsparing hand. To waste words on the question of language when the issue is clear, is to thrust a club between the spokes and to call a halt on progress. Our Conference does not exist in order to

preserve any particular language, but to maintain unity and spread the Gospel.¹⁷

The early part of the 1900's was too late for a group such as those who made up the First Mennonite Church of Upland to be able to retain identity through their ethnic background for long. The beginning of World War I forced a change upon the group. Because of pressure from the community English was given a greater place in the worship service although German was not completely dropped. In 1922 a college student wrote a short history of the church as a term paper. In it she wrote,

Now the Sunday School is entirely conducted in the English language with the exception of three classes. The church services on Sunday mornings and evenings are also English tho twice a month a German sermon is given as well as the English one, in the morning services. Midweek prayer-meetings are alternately English and German.¹⁸

While the First Mennonite Church wanted to be a German church at the beginning it was not able to remain so. The language formed a barrier between it and the community until about 1920. Up to this time there was very little cooperation evident between the Mennonites and other Protestant denominations in the community. But once that barrier was removed the congregation began to move out to greater identity with the community. But it moved slowly and cautiously. It may be that the animosity

¹⁷A. S. Shelly, "English or German--Which?" The Mennonite (November 1899), 12.

¹⁸Monica Horsch, "The First Mennonite Church of Upland, California" (unpublished term paper, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, 1922).

that the community had shown to this German church during the war lingered for a time and was not quickly overcome. We shall now note the ways in which the church did cooperate with others and become identified with them.

Beginning in 1921 the churches in the community decided to form a community Vacation Bible School for the children. The minutes of May 11, 1921 tell the story.

A committee consisting of E. H. Haury and Rev. Horsch reported as follows: The various churches of this community plan for a Bible study during vacation time.

1. After free discussion a motion carried to table this plan for further consideration, to again consider the Annual Meeting.

2. The following motion was made and carried. That we appreciate the work and approve the plan but feel that it is impossible to join with them at this time.

At the next Annual Meeting of the congregation no specific mention is made of this joint venture but it is clear that the Mennonites went on their own and had their private Bible School. No hint is given as to why the church felt it could not cooperate, but it probably stemmed from fear of weakening their particularity and of becoming secularized. The church had kept their children removed from the activities of the community. They were not permitted to attend the parties of the community, neither were they permitted to attend the social functions at the school. It was felt that the churches in the community were too secularized in their activities. Thus the Mennonites kept to themselves and had their children organize their own activities.

By 1927 an occasion arose which opened the door for cooperation with the Bible School of the community. The church

was host to the Pacific District Conference and the young people's retreat that followed. This necessitated canceling their own Bible School program for that year. The church Board minutes for June of that year state, "that any who wish might send their children to the town vacation Bible School." But this cooperation was for one year only. The next year the church had its own school again.

The year 1927 does mark a transition. In June of that year the Reverend Michael Horsch ended his pastorate. He had been the organizing pastor and had served for all but three years of the church's life. Having been born in Germany and being deeply steeped in German ways, he was not able to lead the congregation into greater cooperation with the community. The pastor who entered the church that fall was the Reverend Lester Hostetler. Hostetler was born in America and had grown up in a solid Mennonite community. But he had a high degree of training for a young man of that day. He had completed college and had graduated from Union Theological Seminary in New York. With a much broader outlook he was in a position to lead the congregation into a wider arena of activity. At the Annual Meeting of December 26, 1928 he encouraged, in his report, "cooperation with other churches in the community in worthy projects." However no action was taken on any specific activities.

While the First Mennonite Church refused to have their children exposed to cooperative ventures the adults were more ready to become involved themselves. The minutes of the Board

meeting of January 5, 1928 read,

Moved, seconded and carried that the Board is heartily in favor and strongly recommends the holding of the six weekly session, beginning with Jan. 10, 1928, of the school of religious education to be held at the Presbyterian church of Upland.

This program was so successful that it was held again in the fall for ten weeks and this time it was held in the Mennonite Church.

Once cooperation was begun it was continued in several areas. In May of 1929 the congregation agreed to work with the Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopal members on the "Mexican community social problem." Just what the nature of this problem was is not explained. In 1930 the ministers of Upland and Ontario arranged a week of evangelistic services just prior to Lent and this was followed by an exchange of pulpits. One area of cooperation that was initiated by the Mennonites was that of music. Hostetler was gifted in music and was interested in promoting choral groups. Cooperation began when the Methodist Church invited the Mennonite Choir to repeat an Easter Cantata in their church. In 1931 the Methodists and Mennonites joined choirs to sing a Christmas Cantata. Later Hostetler formed an Oratorio Society in which members of the community were invited to sing. In cooperating in the area of music the Mennonites were working from a basis of strength and this may have given them a confidence they did not have in other areas.

The First Mennonite Church was reluctant to cooperate in programs that would hinder or discontinue programs the church

felt were vital. In the 1930's the churches of Upland and Ontario held joint Sunday evening services during the summer months in the auditorium of Chaffey High School. For a number of years the possibility of cooperating with this program was raised by the pastor but it was turned down because the older people did not have transportation and it would have meant discontinuing the Christian Endeavor program. However, by 1940 the church finally decided to participate.

Many other cooperative ventures between the churches in the community have had the support and cooperation of the First Mennonite Churches ever since. Outside of the cooperation in music, the Mennonites did not initiate the activity, nor have there been projects that have reflected any unique way the Anabaptist heritage. In other words the cooperation has been on generally accepted terms and the First Mennonite Church of Upland has manifested an increasing desire to participate in these united ventures.

Summary

The purpose of the First Mennonite Church of Upland as seen through its needs has been primarily to maintain a church in the tradition of the Mennonites through the training of the children of the members and by maintaining ties with other Mennonite Churches. It has functioned as an established sect, although it has been moving strongly toward the denominational pattern. In its sectarian patterns it has conformed more to

what Yinger has called an avoidance sect than it has of an aggression sect. It is Yinger's theory that avoidance sects tend to become denominations as the concerns of the sect can be taken over by the denomination. The one major distinctive of the Mennonites has been nonresistance. The church has shown a decreasing interest in upholding this teaching and has, therefore, been able to become more closely identified with other churches in the community. It is Harder's thesis that the General Conference Mennonite Church has held to both voluntarism and separatism and is thus remaining an established sect. The First Mennonite Church has not been strongly voluntaristic for it has never had a strong conversionist emphasis. While it was separatist as a matter of faith at the beginning, separatism has become more of a way of life since then. There has never been a strong sense of need to fulfill the Great Commission in the community. While mission work abroad has been well supported the church has not been involved in mission to the people of the community to any great extent. The First Mennonite Church has become largely a church for a small minority group that is becoming closely identified with the majority of the community.

III. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH SEEN THROUGH ITS ROLES

In Scott Greer's analysis of a group he asserts, "A group is a certain set of relations between individual members."¹⁹

¹⁹Greer, Op. Cit., p. 21.

These relations set up specific roles or functions which are determined by the purpose of the group. Thus an analysis of the roles that are performed in the group will help one determine the purpose of the group. In defining a role Greer says that it is

a clearly defined complex of rights and duties assigned to the person occupying a certain position in a group. It encompasses what is expected of him and what he has a right to expect of others.²⁰

When the church was organized in 1903 it immediately set into motion a variety of roles. Within a year the major roles that are in existence today were quite well defined, although not all of these were defined within the first constitution. This lack probably occurred for two reasons. The first is that some were taken for granted and were so well known that it seemed superfluous to define them. The second is that the activities of the group were categorized into departments. Besides the activities of the church organization itself we also find the Sunday School, the Christian Endeavor and the Women's Missionary Society. Later a men's organization was formed as well as a youth group.

In the following analysis we shall place the roles of persons within the church into categories according to function. These have been named: spiritual, business, educational, technical, connectional, missionary and service.

The study will deal only with what might be called official roles, i.e., roles established by election or appoint-

²⁰ Ibid., p. 22.

ment. It is recognized that many important roles are performed in groups by persons who do not have an office. Since such non-official roles are not recorded in the official documents of a church, they are not available for analysis historically. It should also be noted that holding an office is not always synonymous with leadership. An officer may have status but the power of decision may be held by persons without an office. Such roles are not available for analysis either for the very reasons that impell a person holding power to remain in the background. With the recognition of these limitations the following description of the official roles within the First Mennonite Church of Upland are given with the belief that they basically manifest the central purposes of the church.

The Spiritual Roles

The spiritual roles of the church have been filled primarily by the minister and the deacons. No qualifications for these roles have ever been specified within the constitutions of the church. The office of minister is not even mentioned in the first constitution. The Reverend Horsch was the only minister available at the time of the organization of the church and he was accepted for several years without any remuneration. No mention is made of any salary until the Annual Meeting of January 1, 1908, when it was agreed to pay him \$600.00 for the year. At the end of the year, December 28, 1908, the minutes of the Annual Meeting read, "Decided to ask Bro. Horsch to serve

as pastor for the coming year with the same salary as 1908 and that the salary be paid quarterly." It appears from this that once the minister became salaried the congregation felt they could rightly vote on whether he should be their minister. Thereafter he was voted on annually until 1917 when he asked for a triennial term. Subsequent ministers have all been elected to office on a triennial basis.

The constitution of 1929 is the first to have an extensive article on the pastor. This probably resulted from the change of pastors two years previously. It has a paragraph on the call of the pastor, the term he is to serve, and the duties. Under duties it provides,

The pastor shall minister to the spiritual welfare of the church. He shall administer baptism and communion, and perform such other duties which usually devolve upon a minister of the gospel. He shall be the councillor [sic] of all auxiliary organizations of the church. Membership records shall be kept by the pastor, or under his direction.

The constitution of 1946 has approximately the same wording with this addition, "That he shall visit the membership in as far as possible and give catechetical instruction."

The church has always placed a lot of emphasis upon the visits of the pastor. Being a smaller church there has been a close relation between the pastor and people. While they desire other visits beside those that are made in periods of crises, the ministers have varied in the amount of visitation done. This has been partly due to their varied gifts and their own interests.

A major amount of a pastor's time is given to administrative duties. This is not mentioned as one of the tasks of the pastor except that the pastor is to be the counselor to the auxiliary organizations. Neither does the constitution refer to the work of the pastor in committees in the District and General Conference or within the community. These are activities that have frequently taken a lot of time and the church has been willing for the pastors to do this, but they have not officially recognized these tasks as being part of the work of the pastor. (See Appendix B for a list of the pastors and the years they served.)

For the first thirty years of its existence the church seemed to feel that they knew what the task of the minister was without formal definition. In time it was felt necessary to make the definition more explicit. This may reflect the need of the pastor for guidelines or the feeling of the congregation that certain areas were being neglected.

By 1960, when the congregation was seeking for a minister to fill the office of pastor, the church met to discuss the qualifications for the office. The following are a summary of an informal and unstructured discussion:

- a. A man who is sincere--who honestly believes what he professes.
- b. A man dedicated to preach the gospel of the redeeming love of God in Christ on the Cross.
- c. A man who would not decide for but with people--who does not spoon-feed the members but leads them to a sense of responsibility in our fellowship.

- d. A man who emphasizes the importance for each member to have personal convictions which are his "witness" --that we are a church of believers.
- e. A man who inspires people to be concerned for the purposes and the will of God.
- f. A man who cultivates a Christian fellowship in terms of the Mennonite witness; who is winsome to people with a non-Mennonite background--who holds before us faith-ties should be stronger than blood-ties and traditions.
- g. A man who can lead us, an agrarian and family-oriented congregation, to become aware of our evangelical responsibility under city circumstances and in the family of protestant denominations.²¹

The above paragraph sets forth the role of the pastor quite clearly. It is a recent production and cannot be said to be normative for the earlier years. The first five points probably reflect some of the concerns of the church from the beginning. The minister was the spiritual leader of the congregation.

The deacons also participated in the spiritual ministry of the church. When the church was organized two men were elected to serve as deacons. The next year a third deacon was added. The reason for this increase in number is not apparent. The status of deacons within the Mennonite churches has always been high. They have been ordained to office while all other officers are merely installed. In many congregations the deacons were ordained to the office for life. From the beginning the First Mennonite Church elected deacons for a specific term, and beginning in 1910 they were not eligible for re-election until

²¹From a letter to the Reverend P. K. Reigier written by Dr. David Eitzen, chairman of the Pastoral Committee, November 8, 1960.

they had been out of office for one year. Because of this stipulation a large number of persons have filled the office. A total of forty-one persons have served in this capacity until 1966. (See Appendix C for the list of deacons and the number of years they served.) Sixteen persons have served more than one term, and twelve have served more than two terms. One person served a total of thirteen years. He was the Reverend Alfred Wiebe. Wiebe resided in the community but he was never the pastor of the congregation. A total of seven ministers have served as deacons in the history of the congregation and they have served a combined total of forty-seven years.

While the qualifications for a deacon were never specified, the type of person that has been chosen to be a deacon is one who manifests an interest in religious activities, has the ability to lead a worship service, is able to pray publicly, and is at ease in calling on persons who are sick or in need. He was to be a person of honest character and one who was dedicated to the church. For this reason a person who had been ordained as a minister was an obvious choice for the position, although they were not always the ones chosen. All but two of the deacons have been men. Women were not considered eligible for the position until recent years, however there were no written restrictions. The first woman to obtain the position was appointed in mid-year following a resignation. She was then elected to the office at the next Annual Meeting which was 1960.

The first constitution states that it is the duty of the

deacons "to watch over the spiritual life of the members, the purity of doctrine and the order of religious worship. It shall be their further duty to visit and comfort the sick and provide for the need of the destitute." One additional task was to set the date for the four communion services held each year.

The minister together with the deacons were called the Church Board in the years from 1929-1946. The duties described above for the deacons are then given to both the minister and the deacons.

Reading the reports of the deacons to the congregation given at the Annual Meetings one senses that a lot of time was taken up with such organizational work as planning for meetings and scheduling speakers, while only a minimum of time was spent in discussing the spiritual life of the congregation or of individuals in particular. The first mention of a report to the congregation by the deacons is found in the Annual Meeting minutes of January 14, 1942, and the first written report is found in the Annual Meeting minutes of January 19, 1948. There are no records of the meetings of the deacons and ministers prior to 1947.

In the report of the deacons given on January 16, 1952, there was an attempt to assess their work in the light of the duties recorded in the constitution. They stated first of all that there were no destitute members so that they had no work in that area. Then the report continues,

Neither has there been any organized program to 'visit and comfort the sick.' Several members of the Board, it is true, have made such visitations, but not in any official capacity. This is an area of obligation in which the Board is no doubt quite lax, first because of the press of private life, second because no one of us is particularly skilled in this duty, and third, it has been assumed this is primarily the work of the pastor.

In a later paragraph the report continues:

Most of the activity of the Board has been related to the first constitutional injunction, to 'foster the spiritual life of the Church.' The work of the church relating to young people, the order of worship, and the worship itself at the Sunday morning service, the mid week prayer meetings all have come up for discussion and consideration at the meetings of the Board. The Sunday evening services in particular have been discussed, usually at the instance of the Pastor at several meetings. Another matter is the catechism class.

In the above quotations we have what is a typical summary of the activities of the deacons. Confrontation on a personal level with members of the congregation by individual deacons or by the Board appears to be quite infrequent. The needs the deacons met were group needs more than individual and personal needs. These more personal needs, for counseling and prayer, were probably provided by a variety of members of the congregation who ministered in a sensitive way to each other.

There is evidence of only one occasion when the deacons were concerned with "purity of doctrine." This was in 1955. At that time the Reverend Paul Goering was the minister. Several of the deacons began to suspect him of liberal teachings that they could not accept. The minutes of June 17, 1955, of the Deacon's Meeting record the digest of the questions that were posed to the pastor and the answers he gave. They are:

- Q. "Deity of Jesus." Ans. "Fully God and fully man."
 Q. "Virgin Birth of Jesus?" Ans. "Affirm Virgin Birth."
 Q. "Bible as the Word of God?" Ans. "Affirmed."
 Q. "Second coming of Christ?" Ans. "Has already come and is still coming."
 Q. "Did Jesus rise in Body or in Spirit?" Ans. "Rose in Resurrected Body."
 Q. "Do you agree with Pacific Dist. Constitution?" Ans. "Agree."

The outcome of the meeting was that "it was agreed upon that we would try to understand the Bible better and understand each other better and work together." However three of the four deacons subsequently resigned from the Board and two of them withdrew from the congregation with their wives.

This controversy cannot be said to be a Mennonite problem for such controversies are common among churches holding to a conservative theology. But this is evidence of tension, if not religious change, due to the influence of other denominations. While the pastor was able to satisfy the deacons under close questioning, their later actions reveal that there was a recognizable difference in outlook between them and the minister who had been trained at Yale. The members of the congregation were behind the pastor in large enough numbers that the deacons found it necessary to resign and leave the congregation to hold to their integrity.

It should not be concluded that this was the only time concern for doctrine was manifested. It was, no doubt, manifested in the choice of speakers and in the literature that was used by the congregation in its various programs.

The Business Roles

The second category of roles that can be observed within the congregation is that of business. The church as an institution has its organizational work and this provides a number of functions for its members. The First Mennonite Church at its first organizational meeting elected a chairman (later frequently called president), secretary, and later appointed a treasurer. Up until 1927 the business of the congregation was conducted at the Annual Meeting and a few called meetings each year. Thus the task of the officers of the church were not great. But when there were monthly business meetings involving all the elected officials of the church, then these roles demanded more time.

During the first eleven years of the congregation the minister was also the chairman of the congregation. When he left for a three year period beginning in 1915 then other members of the church were elected to this position. At this time the role of chairman became distinct from that of the spiritual leader. At times it was filled by men who would not have accepted the office of deacon for they looked upon the role of chairman as a business function rather than a spiritual function.

The church did not have a vice-chairman until 1929. This office has not held much stature although there have been a few times when it has led to the position of chairman.

At its beginning the church elected three trustees. Their duties were three-fold, to collect the monies authorized by the congregation and disburse them according to the wishes of the

congregation, to appoint a treasurer, and to maintain the property of the church. For the first years of the congregation they were solely responsible for the business of the congregation. In later years this was given over to the church Council which was made up of all elected officers and of representatives from the various auxiliaries. The trustees were also responsible for the German school after it had been held for seven years.

Twice in the life of the congregation building committees were formed to plan and oversee the building of a house of worship. These committees were formed of a representative body of men in the church who knew something about business and how to go about the task they had to perform. Much of the work was donated so these men also needed to organize such activities.

Beside the business of the church itself, there were also leaders in the various subsidiary groups, such as the Sunday School, the Christian Endeavor, and the various auxiliary groups of the church.

The business roles of the church were designed to function in ways that would help the church fulfill its needs for worship, learning, decision making, fellowship and service. The role of chairman could have been placed among the spiritual roles for during all but three of the first twenty-four years of the church's life this position was filled by ordained ministers. Then for the next twelve years the office was held by Lucas Horsch the son of the organizing minister.

At the beginning the business aspects of the life of the

church were kept quite separate from the spiritual. The trustees and the deacons did not meet together to see how their work was interrelated, and to make joint decisions where needed. The work of the church was segmented and not seen as a whole. The business of the church was a function of the church but it was placed on a different level from the spiritual roles. The trustees worked unilaterally until the Church Council was formed and then the decisions of the various groups were submitted to this body.

The Educational Roles

Education was seen as a primary need in the church and this has provided a number of positions within the congregation. The pastors have served as teachers when they instructed the catechism classes, German school, Sunday School classes and in the Vacation Bible School. But this was also the function of a large number of other persons. The Sunday School was organized a month before the congregation and the children as well as the adults were instructed in the Bible and the Christian faith. From the beginning there was also the Christian Endeavor program which was held on Sunday evenings. There have been more persons teaching than there have been in the rest of the roles combined. Here the women of the church have held a great number of positions generally out-numbering the men. As much time has been given to study as there has been given to worship.

The purpose of the church as seen in its educational roles has been to teach the Christian faith and its application in life.

It has not always been clear whether the faith as such or its expression in life was held to be the more important. But for the most part it appears that the church has been concerned about the quality of life.

The Technical Roles

We use the word technical here to refer to the roles that are based on the possession of a special talent or a trained skill. The church has had a variety of roles in this group ranging from organist, song leaders, choir directors, and choir members. The music program was not meant to be an end in itself but a means by which the church worshiped and gave expression to its faith. The church was able in its early years to provide for these roles from among its members until recent years. These persons were not given any remuneration for their services although as early as 1916 it was suggested that the organist should be a paid position because of the difficulty of obtaining persons to fulfill this task. Beginning in 1946 the church engaged an organist from outside the congregation and since then has hired both organists and choir directors. When there have been members of the congregation who have had musical talent, they have been employed by the congregation.

The church has enjoyed good music and this has been a guiding purpose in their going outside the congregation to obtain persons who are trained. Yet this has not detracted from the central emphasis of the music program, namely: the worship of

God. The Music Committee in 1966 set forth a memo as a guide for the organists and music directors. In this guide they stated,

The First Mennonite Church of Upland through its Church Council appoints a Music Committee to be responsible for the ministry of music as a part of the congregation's total witness. As such the Music Committee needs to be sensitive to the concerns of the entire fellowship.

Central in the activities of the church is the worship of God. A choir is formed to inspire and lead the church in this worship.

Also in the area of technical roles we can place the janitor and church secretary. Both of these positions have been salaried and have been filled by members of the congregation. A janitor was hired when the congregation first had its own place of worship. A secretary has been utilized only since 1956. The purpose of the church in forming these roles are quite obvious. The janitor was to take care of the house of worship and keep it presentable and useable for the meetings of the congregation. The secretary has helped the minister to be more efficient in the use of his time and has provided the needed services the church desires.

The Connectional Roles

In looking at the needs of the congregation we have seen that they desired to maintain connections with other Mennonite churches and to take a part in the larger Mennonite organizations. To help them in this the church has had correspondents to the various English and German papers. These were offices filled by election for many years. The purpose of these communications was

to maintain fellowship ties. It was also a way of sharing ideas and programs that the congregation found helpful.

The church also maintained connection with the larger Mennonite bodies through having its ministers and members serve on boards and committees when elected. Having members serve in this manner not only helped the congregation fulfill its need for a wider witness through mission and service work, but it also added to the prestige of the church.

At various times there have been local inter-denominational organizations in which the church has cooperated. Participation in the activities of these organizations has not involved a very large number of persons, but by its participation the church has given witness to their faith in the unity of the Christian Church.

The Missionary Roles

This term has been used to think of the outreach of the church into the community. Of the roles which we have spoken of thus far there are none that have had the task of making a witness to or of serving the non-churched persons in the community. Neither the minister nor the deacons were given the duty of calling on persons in the community to see about their spiritual needs. While the deacons were to see about the needs of the destitute within the church, they were not given any mandate to be concerned about others.

Periodically the ministers of the congregation have

emphasized the need for evangelistic activity in the community. The earliest record of such activity is found in the minutes of the Council meeting of September 3, 1931, when the Reverend A. J. Neuenschwander was the minister. The minutes state, "A motion was made that the Council go on record as supporting the Pastor's plan with regard to a more definite evangelistic evening service and that the choir be appealed to lend their assistance in carrying out this plan. This motion was carried." There is no evidence as to the success or failure of these efforts.

Neuenschwander strongly emphasized the need for evangelistic efforts and he himself was active in visiting in the community. He became the pastor of the congregation in September, 1929. By the time of the Annual Meeting on December 26, 1929, he was able to report, "We have made a fair beginning to visit each home in the congregation. In addition we have been in more than a dozen homes, of such who are not in the church, but who we hope to interest in the Cause of Christ." The following year he could report he had made seventy-seven visits to non-member homes.

The aggressive efforts at outreach of Reverend Neuenschwander were not indigenous to the church; so he did not wear well with the congregation. By March of 1933 the congregation voted not to extend him another term as pastor. His methods were foreign to the church, but they did show some effect in the short time he was the pastor. Prior to his coming only six persons with non-Mennonite background had joined the church without

having a spouse in the congregation. During his four years as pastor he received eight persons with non-Mennonite background only one of whom was married to a member of the congregation.

The Reverend Hostetler, who was more in tune with the mood of the congregation, was not as much for evangelistic meetings and the emotional approach. Rather he encouraged members of the church to win others. In his report to the Annual Meeting of January 13, 1937, he urged, "Each member should find someone who is not going to church or who is not a Christian and try to use his influence in getting him or her to share the good things which Christ has brought into your own life." The following year he recommended to the Council on September 15, 1938, "that an evangelistic committee be appointed consisting of two from the Sunday School workers, two from the Christian Endeavor workers, two at large, and one or more of the deacons, to advise with the Pastor and assist the pastor in carrying through a program of parish evangelism during the year." This recommendation was adopted, but no further mention is made of this committee.

The next pastor, Earl Salzman, recommended in his first report to the Annual Meeting of the congregation, on January 14, 1942,

that a further study be made of the possibilities of personal visitation evangelism be made. . . . I recommend that the pastor with an appointed or selected committee study this problem with the idea of sending out certain members two by two to call on such prospects that should be won to Christ and the Church.

No action was taken on this recommendation. However, another

recommendation for a catechism class for older Juniors to be held during Sunday School was adopted.

On June 3, 1946, Salzman suggested that the congregation obtain a person "to work with the Pastor in a visitation and evangelistic program with a view to bringing people into the Church who now have no church home and also to bring old members back into the Church." Rollin Moser was employed in this role the following month. He was given the title of Assistant Pastor. However by the next year he had become so involved in the work with the young people of the church that his title was changed to "Youth Program Director." This new role did not totally eliminate the visitation program for in his report to the Annual Meeting on January, 1948, he recorded, "Your minister and assistant have attempted to carry on a visitation program among the church members and prospective church members. These visits have proven very enjoyable and worthwhile. Some of these have yielded fruit for Christ and the Church." The next month he accepted a job outside the church and the church has not employed a person to do the visitation since.

The women of the church have been organized into a number of societies that have somewhat the character of outreach. The Women's Missionary Society was formed in 1903. Their interest has been almost solely with mission work away from the home community. They have studied about the mission work of the Conference and have had a variety of projects to raise money for the support of missions. In 1910 the Serving Others Circle was

organized. Their purpose as given in their constitution states,

The aim of this organization shall be to promote interest in missions, to develop spiritually, to further benevolences, and to engage in such social activities as are in harmony with the principles of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

From this it is apparent that the mission of the church is seen as being away from the home community.

The church has not broken to any great extent the pattern it set at the beginning of its organization. Outreach in evangelism and service have both been limited. In 1966 a Ministry of Outreach was formed, coordinate with a Ministry of Fellowship, Business, and Education. This should give the congregation guidance in this area in the future.

Summary

The purpose of the First Mennonite Church as it has been seen in the roles of the church has been primarily the furtherance of the life of the Mennonite Church and the development of its spiritual life. The church has ministered to its own needs for worship, Christian education, and fellowship. While sizable amounts of money have been contributed to mission work abroad, the congregation itself has not seen itself engaged in mission to others. Members of the community have been brought into the church over the years so that of the 155 active resident members, twenty-five, or sixteen per cent, are of non-Mennonite parentage. Fifteen of these are not related by marriage to members of the church. Ten of the twenty-five joined the church by baptism.

This reveals a degree of openness to others and a desire to incorporate converts and Christians interested in joining the fellowship into the church. But this has been a secondary emphasis and effort.

IV. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH SEEN THROUGH ITS SANCTIONS

Scott Greer indicates that to fulfill the needs of a group the group not only sets up roles and lines of communication, but it also sets up norms by which the life of the group is governed. He sets forth the proposition that, "the concrete group exists only when it is an effective control of individual behavior."²² If this is true, then an understanding of the group should allow one to predict the behavior of the members of the group. While there is always deviation from the norms of the group, and while deviation within certain limits does not prevent the group from persisting and fulfilling its functions, yet "deviation is always a potential threat to the character and existence of a group."²³ Over a period of time a group's norms may change. This is especially true if the dominant function of the group changes. Modification of a group's norms may be necessary if the group's needs are to be met for needs also change as new situations and problems arise.

In upholding the norms it has established a group imposes sanctions. These may be either formal or informal. Formal

²²Greer, Op. Cit., p. 26.

²³Ibid.

sanctions would involve the threat, or even the action, of exclusion from the group. Informal sanctions may be both positive and negative. Positively a group maintains its norms by acceptance, praise and identification. Negatively it may accomplish its work by verbal whippings or by giving the deviant the "cold shoulder." In a group whose main function is the experience of being together and acting together informal sanctions are used much more frequently than are the formal sanctions. Formal sanctions are used more frequently in groups where there is a job to be accomplished.

Discipline in the Church

The First Mennonite Church of Upland listed some of its sanctions in the first constitution that was written. Article 6 of that constitution is entitled "Discipline." The article states, "A Scriptural discipline shall be practiced in the Church according to Matt. 18:15-18 and 2 Cor. 2:6-8." In the quotation from Matthew there are both informal and formal sanctions. Discipline is to begin at the personal level, between the two persons involved. If this is not successful, then the action becomes more formal with a third party brought in. It ends in formal action before the church if it has not been resolved at the two previous levels. If the person who has deviated from the standards of the church is still recalcitrant, then the Church is to exclude him from the fellowship and begin all over again by recognizing that the person is no longer a part of the

fellowship.

In seeking to determine how the church has used this sanction no evidence was discovered in the documents of the church. While some Mennonite churches in America frequently had erring members of the church make a confession before the entire body or be excluded from the fellowship, the First Mennonite Church never engaged in such a practice. Checking with some of the older members it was said that the closest the church ever came to such an action was in the early years when the Deacons and the minister agreed that one of the members should not participate in the communion service. The person involved did not come to the service so that it never became an open issue.

The statement on discipline was broadened in 1929 to take in another situation. Added was the statement, "Should misunderstanding or strife arise between members of the church, every effort shall be made to heed the injunction of I Cor. 6: 1-8." It is not known just what occurred that such a provision was included in the constitution. There is evidence of a disturbance between two families in the 1940's that was brought before the minister and deacons. It was agreed that both families should appear before this body, but one of the families refused. It appears that the minister was then caught between the two families and that the issue was not fully resolved. No other instance of the use of this provision by the church is recorded.

The Norm of Active Membership

In the first two constitutions many of the norms of the church were left undefined. At the beginning of the church it was obvious that those who became members desired to attend the meetings of the group and support it financially as active participants. But as the group grew in age there were those who moved away and/or lost the interest they had at the first. By 1929 the church was beginning to face this problem. The constitution now provided that

Non-resident members shall report annually to the Church Board and give their financial support to the work of the church. Those who fail to comply with this request for a period of two years shall be suspended. Such members, however, shall be reinstated as soon as they fulfill these conditions.

It goes on to say, "The church shall consider it a privilege to minister to the spiritual needs of all non-resident members."

It appears that this sanction and the norm it was to enforce went contrary to the need of the members of the church to continue to have a tie with family members who had moved away or who had become indifferent. In 1937 Reverend Hostetler wrote in his annual Pastor's report,

Our membership remains practically what it was last year. . . . the membership remains at 317. A careful checking of the church rolls reveals the fact that a large number of this total are either non-resident or non-active. Approximately 85 could be put in this class, leaving a total of 232 active resident members. Unfortunately we have lost during the past years a large number of young people who because of economic reasons or because of attending schools at distant places, moved too far away to take much part in the work of the church. We are glad to know that many of these are taking an active interest in the religious work of the communities into which they have moved, showing that they are taking with them

the faith and ideals with which they grew up in their home church. It is regrettable that a considerable number of young people who have their names on the church roll, are not active in the work of the church, which reminds us that the church in modern times has a difficult time to meet the impact of the world with all of its competitive voices and organization. We are glad on the other hand to report a fine spirit of loyalty and cooperation on the part of most of our young people.

From the figures quoted in the above paragraph it becomes apparent that the church did not use the sanction of suspending members from the fellowship.

The 1929 constitution was concerned only about the problem of non-resident members. By 1946 the church was faced with the more difficult problem of inactive members residing in the community. Thus an even stronger sanction than suspension was written into the constitution. Under Article IV, which dealt with membership, they ruled,

The church may terminate the membership of any person who for the space of two years fails to either worship habitually with the church or contribute to its support. Such action shall not be taken except after due notice and hearing and kindly effort to make it unnecessary.

If it was thought that stronger sanctions would help to make members more active, the thought was in error. By 1949 the membership stood at its highest peak with 362 persons on the roll. But the number of non-resident and inactive members had increased to the extent that in 1951 the active church membership was reported as 210. In other words, over one-third of the membership on the books was no longer participating in the life of the church.

The church found it very difficult to use the sanctions

they had established. While they wanted to have a live and active church group, they also wanted to retain the ties, no matter how tenuous, with persons who had forsaken the church or left the community. In 1955 Pastor Goering sent out a letter to the inactive members to determine if they still considered themselves members, had joined another church, or wished to discontinue their membership. There were a number of members who later criticized the letter as some of the persons contacted took the letter as an indication that they were no longer wanted by the church. Yet the response to the letter indicated that there were a number of persons who had joined other churches and had not notified the home congregation of their action. In the attitudes of the members we see an inner conflict between the need to have a meaningful church life and the need to maintain ties of love and relationship with those who left the church. The result has been that the church has been most reluctant to use the sanctions they had made available. The norm of a vital relationship to the church was sacrificed for the norm of continued contact with the lost sheep. At one time when the deacons were considering placing members who were inactive on an inactive list one member wrote them a letter naming twelve persons who were relatives who were potentially under consideration. The letter was a plea that action not be taken for fear of alienating any one of them.

The Norm of Consistent Christian Living

A second norm of the church was the concern for a

consistent Christian life. This concern was expressed in the first constitution in an article entitled "Secret Societies and Sinful Pleasures." It stated, "Members shall shun all secret societies in accordance with the Word of God and Christian life and thought. Also it is not proper for a Church member to fellowship with evil companions and participate in sinful pleasures." The sanctions by which these norms were to be upheld were the provisions under the discipline and the deacons were the ones who were given the responsibility for carrying out the task. It was specifically stated in the constitution of 1910 that "It is the duty of the Board of Deacons to watch over the spiritual life of the members. . . ."

The First Mennonite Church of Upland was organized at the time that there was a depth of concern in the General Conference over participation in secret societies. This had stemmed from the fact that during the 1850's and 1860's when the General Conference was in the process of formation there was a general and widespread concern in the nation about the nature of secret societies. Thus when the General Conference was organized in 1861 it was stipulated "that no one may be a member of the Mennonite denomination who is a member of a secret society."²⁴ There were three major reasons why Mennonites objected to these secret organizations. It was felt, first of all, that Christians should

²⁴H. P. Krehbiel, The History of the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America (Published by the author, 1898), p. 82.

always speak the truth and live an open honest life. Thus anything secret was seen as antithetical to the Christian life. Secondly, the church opposed it because the lodge's concept of brotherhood was contrary to that of Christian brotherhood. A Christian's loyalty was to be to other Christians and not to be based on any other membership. Thirdly, the quasi-religious character of these groups also made them suspect.

The First Mennonite Church probably had no difficulty in maintaining the standard in the early years. But as it had to deal with persons desiring to join the church from other backgrounds it faced a new problem. In 1924 a young man who was interested in marrying a girl in the church desired to become a member. His father was a strong mason and the young man was a member of the youth organization. Before this person was permitted to become a member of the church he was asked to sever his relations with the society. The minutes of the Church Council of May 6, 1931, have this recorded, "The question was raised as to what attitude to take in the matter of admitting such into membership who are members of secret orders. Discussion followed but no definite conclusion reached." Two years before this a young man was baptized whose father was a member of a secret society. The father may have joined the church if it had been willing to accept him without a demand to sever his lodge membership. The pastor at this time was the Reverend Neuenschwander who had formerly held pastorates in Pennsylvania. The churches in Pennsylvania were more open to accepting lodge members and it is

likely that he would have been willing to accept this family if the church would.

In time the statement against secret societies became less legislative and it is not known whether members of the church are lodge members or not. In general membership in such organizations has not been a problem as there has been no strong desire on the part of most to become affiliated with such groups. The church has also seen that there are groups other than secret societies that demand loyalties that need to be questioned. The current revision of the constitution is considering a broader statement that will include all such organizations without singling out any particular type.

There is no indication in the minutes that the church ever disciplined formally members who did not live a consistent life. Older members recall instances of informal discipline. Mrs. Isaac Habegger recalls that in 1903 the first baptismal group decided to have their picture taken the day they were baptized by one of the members who was a commercial photographer. After the deed was done it became known in the church and one of the leaders of the church expressed his opinion that it was not in keeping with the mood of baptism. On another occasion three young men of the church decided to participate in a Fourth of July parade. One of the men who was short and quite a comedian dressed as a baby and rode in a baby carriage while the other two pushed him. Members of the church felt that such action was not in keeping with Christian dignity. But again formal action was

not taken by the church.

A large variety of activities were deemed inappropriate for Christians, such as excessive drinking of alcoholic beverage, card playing, dancing, attendance at movies, etc. The feeling in the church that it should not participate in the activities of the world was strong in the early days. But the lines of division were not always clear. When the churches of the community began sponsoring competitive sports the church was not able to make a clear decision. On January 22, 1926, a special meeting of the Sunday School Executive Committee was called to discuss such a program. The minutes read,

The matter brought up and discussed as to whether the boys of the Sunday School should join the basketball league between the different churches or not. It was decided that they join this league as a class but not in the name of the church.

In more recent years the church has felt it was their responsibility to support such programs for the youth of the church and have paid the entrance fee for the team.

Another activity the church rejected was scouting. In 1926 Paul Schowalter was interested in starting a Boy Scout Troop within the church. He brought it before the Executive Committee of the Sunday School on two different occasions. The second time was on September 13, 1926. The minutes read,

The matter as to what should be done about Boy Scout work was brought up for discussion. A motion was made to give Paul Schowalter permission to start a Boy Scout Troop when he sees fit. The motion carried. However, the deacons present thought it best to bring the matter before the Church Business Meeting.

There is no minute on the subject in the books of the church but the program was not accepted as proper for the Mennonite Church to sponsor. No reasons are given for the rejection but it was generally felt in Mennonite circles that the uniform of the Boy Scouts and the drills were too related to the military for the church to give it their approval.

Even though the church as a whole would not sponsor a scouting program members of the church have been very active in it. Paul Schowalter became active in the Boy Scout program through the Presbyterian Church and served for fifteen years with commendation. Later several women of the church became active in Girl Scouts, some serving for twenty years. Also many of the youth of the church have been in the scouting program.

Over the years the ideas as to what is appropriate for Christians has changed considerably. At the present time the young people have a variety of activities in the Fellowship Hall of the church when this would have been impossible a few decades ago. Generally the activities engaged in by the young people have not met with too much opposition. But not all requests are approved. In 1959 the sponsors of the youth program came with a request to the Church Council that the youth be permitted to have square dancing in the Fellowship Hall. The request met with opposition on the part of some so the sponsors withdrew the request. The majority of the young people attend school dances at the present time and have not looked to the church to provide this type of activity.

Another area of life that has undergone change among the members of the First Mennonite Church has been that of marriage and divorce. Mennonites have held marriage to be sacred and inviolable. Divorce was unthinkable. In many congregations persons were disciplined for marrying someone outside the church even though they were Christians of another denomination. The Upland church never had such a requirement and almost from the beginning there were members who had spouses who were not Mennonites. Divorce in the early years was non-existent. The church accepted a divorced person into the church in 1920 but this was recognized as a special case. The issue was brought before a special meeting of the congregation. The minutes of that meeting report, ". . . being a divorced woman, the innocent party in this particular case; was accepted, under conditions should she re-marry this would cancel her membership with the church."

The Reverend Horsch, the pastor until 1927, had a policy according to his son that he would never perform a marriage for a divorced person. The first divorce occurring in the church took place in 1931. The member was living in Los Angeles and was married to a non-member. No disciplinary action was taken. Since 1950 there have been a total of twelve divorces within the church. In each case one of the spouses was a person of non-Mennonite parentage and in eight of the families one of the persons did not become a member of the church.

The earliest constitutions say nothing about marriage and divorce. It was not until 1946 that the church finally inserted

a paragraph on marriage. Then they affirmed "that marriage is an ordinance of God which should be entered into reverently and in the knowledge that it constitutes a life union not to be broken by divorce." But by 1953 the church was ready to accept divorce as a fact of life that needed to be met as a human problem. In June of that year the minutes of the church record,

A request has come from Vernon Friesen, a member of the First Mennonite Church at Reedley, and Josephine Block, a divorcee of Pomona for the use of the sanctuary and the church dining room for their wedding on July 31st, also they request that the ceremony be performed by our pastor Rev. Goering.

The Reverend Goering had just been called to serve the congregation and was to arrive the middle of July. The minutes state further,

After some discussion a motion was made by Frank Gingerich, seconded by George Collier and carried, that the president and secretary write a letter to Rev. Goering giving him all necessary details, asking for an answer to this request.

A month later, on July 5th, the minutes record,

A letter was read by the secretary from Rev. Paul Goering in answer to the request of Vernon Friesen and Josephine Block to be married in our church. Rev. Goering wishes to interview these young people before giving a definite answer. A motion was made, seconded and carried that this couple may have the use of the sanctuary and dining room for their wedding.

By their action the Council opened the way for the pastor to perform the ceremony. These persons were not members of the church so the decision may have been a little easier. Since then two members of the church have married divorcees with one of the weddings taking place in the church.

The Norm of Correct Belief

A third norm of the church has been that Christian faith should be held by all members. The first constitution did not go into specifics. Under the article entitled "Confession" they set forth, "In general we hold with all true Christians to the Word of God as the only rule and standard of faith and life. Then, in particular, we hold to the doctrine of the Mennonite Church as our own personal interpretation of the Word of God." In 1929 they enunciated a few of these principles: "a. Baptism upon repentance and confession of faith; b. Charity (love) toward all men; c. Seeking after holiness; d. Non-resistance; e. Non-swearing of oaths; f. Non-secretism." These positions were elaborated at greater length in the constitutions of 1946 and 1959.

Generally Mennonites have been more concerned about right living more than they have about correct belief. It has been the minister who has been the one who has set the standard for faith. However, in keeping with the doctrine of the church as being composed of believers, the constitution of 1910 makes it the responsibility of the deacons to watch over the "purity of doctrine and the order of religious worship."

The extent to which the church has manifested concern over doctrine is not evident from the minutes for outside of the situation in 1955 which has been recounted no other mention is made of any disturbance. The church through the years has had the reputation among other Mennonite churches as being liberal in

its stance. During the years of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy the church had a pastor trained at Union Theological Seminary so that the congregation had liberal leadership.

The mood of the congregation is seen in the action taken by the church in 1931. The General Conference was proposing that a fairly lengthy statement of faith be adopted. This statement had been supported by the largest congregation in the General Conference and their conservative pastor. This statement was submitted to the churches for their reaction. After considering it the following action was taken:

The Board recommends that the church does not favor the adoption of the proposed Articles of Faith. That we favor continuing as has been done till now, without committing ourselves to uniform Articles of Faith any further than what is contained in the Conference Constitution for the present. That we favor continuing to use the Riis Articles as a guide.

These recommendations were adopted by the church on December 30, 1931. It should be noted that the proposed Articles of Faith were never adopted by the General Conference.

The church has required that persons joining the church make a statement on their religious experience and faith, but it has not been requiring that this be any specific affirmation. There has been an emphasis on the freedom of the individual. The sentiment has been expressed that if any person desires to join the church, they should be accepted. As far as is known, no person has ever been turned away because their statement of faith did not measure up to what the church expected.

Summary

The church at the outset had for its purposes, according to its norms, a committed Christian fellowship dedicated to high moral standards and holding to the faith as interpreted by the Mennonites. This stance was tempered by the needs of the congregation to continue their close family ties. The effect has been, on the one hand, an increasing vagueness in the meaning of membership in the church. On the other hand it has meant a growing acceptance of persons who have manifested deviant behavior, and an openness to a greater variety in the content of faith.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we have sought to determine what the purposes of the congregation have been during the first sixty years of its life. These were determined by the use of the three criteria suggested by Scott A. Greer, namely: needs, roles, and norms. On the basis of these we come to the following conclusions.

The mission of the First Mennonite Church has been, according to the analysis of its needs, to perpetuate the Christian faith in a German Mennonite style through the families of the church. In time, as the members were assimilated into the life of the community, the use of the German language was terminated. However, there are still strong cultural ties affecting the life of the church that stem from the Germanic

heritage. The Mennonite aspect of the faith has also been undergoing transformation. While organizational ties have continued, other distinctive emphases, such as non-resistance, have declined. Closer ties with the Christians of the community have been formed so that there is little hesitation to cooperate in programs that the majority of churches can support. The church has not seen its mission to be the promotion of the Mennonite interpretation of faith among other Christians nor has it sought to include large numbers of the community in its life.

By the study of the roles performed by members of the First Mennonite Church we can conclude that the major purpose of the church has been the continuation of worship and Bible study among its members. The inner personal needs of the congregation's members have received almost sole attention for little effort has been put forth to bring the Gospel to bear upon the life of the members of the community. What has been done has been mainly through the personal life of the members.

From the way the norms of the church have changed over the years we can conclude that the church has been undergoing both religious change and secularization. We cannot equate all changes with secularization for some of the changes have occurred from a fuller understanding of the Biblical faith. By secularization we refer to the growing practice of carrying out life's decisions without reference to the standards of the faith. Whether any particular change is due to larger faith or to secularization is not easily determined. Evidence of secular-

ization of norms appears in the inability of the congregation to find a solution to the problem of inactive members. Another is the growing number of divorces which has begun to plague the church.

At the present time there is not a great distinction between the faith and life of the members of the First Mennonite Church and that of other Christians in the community. This would suggest that the distinctive purposes which formed the church at its beginning have been disintegrating and that no new ones have been formed to captivate the interest of the group. The church is showing many of the characteristics of a denomination and less of those of an established sect. The fact that a large percentage of the congregation is still Mennonite by heritage may say that this part of the heritage can become vital if the congregation is able to unite on what that heritage has to say to life in the present world. Another possible direction for the church to move would be to become even more closely aligned with other denominations in the community. The perpetuation of a heritage that has lost a lot of its meaning may no longer be felt important. If this is the case, enough ties have already been made with churches in the community to make this a live choice.

In the next chapter we shall analyze the responses of the leaders of the congregation to a presentation of four models of the way churches have envisioned their mission. From this discussion we shall seek to gain an understanding of the congregation's own view of its mission today.

CHAPTER III

THE MISSION OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH AS SEEN BY ITS LEADERS

The question for which we seek an answer in this chapter is: How do the members of the First Mennonite Church of Upland envision their mission today? To obtain the answer a representative group of members were selected to discuss the question. The members who were selected for this purpose were the members of the Church Council. The Council is made up of twenty elected persons. This comprises approximately ten per cent of the active membership. When the discussions were held only thirteen of the members were able to be present. One person who is not on the Council was invited to participate. Thus a total of fourteen members were in on the discussions.

The fourteen persons were divided into two groups which met on separate evenings. The meetings lasted for approximately two hours. At the beginning of both meetings the members were asked to write several paragraphs completing the statement, I belong to the First Mennonite Church because . . . The purpose of these essays was to discover what was meaningful to the members in their relationship to the church. The value of such a statement lies in its spontaneous character. Approximately twenty-five minutes were given to the writing of these statements. These essays will be analyzed and then compared with the more

considered statements made by the members in the discussion that followed.

Following the writing of the essays a presentation was made that outlined four types of churches. The content of this presentation is given in Appendix E. It was made clear that churches do not fit simply into one or the other of these categories, but that a church can have a major thrust in one of the four directions. Also these models were not presented as an exhaustive analysis of the ways in which churches may function. These conceptions of the church were given as models around which the members of the group could organize their thoughts and from which they could evaluate their own conceptions and feelings.

The discussions of the two groups were taped and then transcribed for analysis. The recording of the second group was not entirely successful in that about a third of the discussion was spoiled due to a loose connection. The names of the members of each group and their occupations are:

Group One

Grace Boshart	clerk in a drug store
Jacob Brandt	retired salesman for a furniture store
Marvin Brandt	cement worker
Clarence Dowding	machinist in a factory
David Eitzen	psychology professor in a seminary
Marguerite Johnson	housewife and registered nurse
Albert Schmidt	retired mechanic in fruit-packing house

Group Two

Roy Cabe	building contractor
Nettie Cooley	housewife and store clerk
Amanda Eitzen	nurse for a doctor's office
Chris Krehbiel	carpenter
Pat Lichti	housewife
Herman Rempel	building contractor
James Ruud	worker in Post Office

Of the fourteen members four are not of Mennonite parentage. They are Clarence Dowding, Pat Lichti, James Ruud, and Marguerite Johnson. The first three are married to members of the church who had Mennonite parentage while the latter joined through friendship with a member of the church.

I. ANALYSIS OF THE ESSAYS

The fourteen persons writing to complete the statement, I belong to the First Mennonite Church because . . ., wrote for varying lengths of time. Some found it difficult to put down a sentence or two while others wrote rapidly for the full length of time. The responses have been categorized into five topics: Fellowship, Home Training, Beliefs, Worship, and Service to the World.

Fellowship

The reason most frequently given for affiliation with the First Mennonite Church was the meaningfulness of the fellowship.

There were a total of ten out of the fourteen who gave this as a reason. The four who did not mention this as a factor were all reared in a Mennonite home and this was given as a reason for being members.

Various aspects of fellowship in the church were emphasized. For Albert Schmidt it was mutual assistance and support. He wrote, "I like the friendly attitude of the other members, always ready to guide or help you." For Nettie Cooley and Herman Rempel it was working together as a group. Nettie said, "The church to me is the working together of all members harmoniously. . . ." She wrote also of the mutual concern of the members for each other. For several the fellowship consisted of friendship and the sharing of life. Amanda Eitzen stated, "I belong to First Mennonite Church because of the fellowship it affords me, not only on Sundays, but throughout the week."

Three persons added to the concept of fellowship the feeling of being at home within the group. These were Jacob Brandt, Roy Cabe and Marguerite Johnson. The latter wrote, "I belong to the First Mennonite Church because I feel 'at home' in this church. It was only after some time that this feeling developed which is generally the case with any group that I might join. So because it would be difficult for me to make a change, I have never felt any desire to do so."

All four of the members who were not reared in Mennonite homes emphasized fellowship as one of the reasons for being members. Pat Lichti put this as the very first reason as did

Marguerite Johnson. Pat wrote, "I belong to the First Mennonite Church because of the wonderful spirit of fellowship among the members which I never felt or observed in other Churches I attended. I never actually belonged to any Church before joining this one, and quite frankly never was especially interested in one until I started attending here."

Along with the reason of fellowship we could also put down emphasis on the smallness of the church. Four persons mentioned this. James Ruud ended his statement by saying, "I like the First Mennonite Church because it is small enough in membership that one can get to know nearly all the other members, and greet them on a first name basis." This seemed to be an important factor for Clarence Dowding as well. He wrote, "When I married, I belonged to the Methodist Church and my wife to the Mennonite. She said it was my choice as to which Church we would belong to as a family. After coming to the Mennonite Church for a period of time, I made the decision that we would go to this Church because it was a smaller church making it easier to become acquainted with the members and to know them better."

Home Training

Very closely associated with fellowship was the factor of home training. This fact, being reared in a Mennonite home, was mentioned by all but one of the persons who had such a background. The recognition of family influence came early in the list of reasons for most of the persons. Eight of the nine made this

their first reason. Marvin Brandt gave this as the sole reason for being a member. He wrote, "I belong to the First Mennonite Church because I was raised the Mennonite way and taught the Mennonite beliefs." Chris Krehbiel stated, "I belong to the First Mennonite Church because I was raised a Mennonite and believe in the convictions of our forefathers on which it was established." The role of the family has been significant in the life of the members.

Along with this emphasis upon the influence of their families upon their faith, two also mentioned the importance of the church for their children. Pat Lichti wrote, "I am so grateful for the teachings my children are getting from our Sunday School. This is something that means so much to them and something they look forward to each week. I honestly feel that their being 'brought up' in the First Mennonite Church will help them very much in their adult life and help make them concerned for other people." Chris Krehbiel showed similar sentiments when he wrote, "There is something about Mennonite people that makes them feel their responsibility toward their family, young or old, to put the Church of God before all other things and implant it in the minds of their children at an early age that Church and Christianity comes first at all times."

Beliefs

While the influence of the home was lifted up as a reason for being a member, the beliefs of the Mennonite Church were also

mentioned as being important. For the most part this was just a summary statement such as Clarence Dowding made when he said, "The principles and ideals of the Church were mostly ones that I could conform to and agree with." Seven of the fourteen made some mention of the beliefs and practices as entering into their decision for membership.

For several there was a period of self-examination when a decision was made whether or not to join the church. This is not only the case of the four who were not reared in Mennonite homes, but also for those who were. For instance, while Amanda Eitzen could say, "I was brought up in a home that was Mennonite from the word 'go'." She also states, "In the Meno Academy I wrote an essay on Mennonites which further made me feel I must continue to be a Mennonite." Her husband, David Eitzen, faced the issue somewhat later in life. He wrote, "There were professional 'temptations' to affiliate with 'standard' denominations of greater cultural influence. But to do so would be to deny my subjective temperamental bent and my solidified convictions." Grace Boshart also had occasion to examine the meaning of the Mennonite Church to her life. "As the children grew older and there were some disagreements within the church their father and I didn't want them to be exposed to this type of unhappiness, so as a family we seriously discussed the possibility of making a break and going to another denomination. The more we discussed the firmer became our tie to this church and we decided to be loyal to this congregation. The long and thorough teaching we

had received was too deep to throw aside to accept another."

Specific doctrines that were mentioned by several were the priesthood of believers, nonresistance, integrity, and nonswearing of oaths. Herman Rempel wrote, "I belong to the Mennonite Church as a denomination because of its stand on the priesthood of the individual, its stand on war" David Eitzen put down, "Later I was introduced to our Anabaptist heritage and it was a surprizing revelation for me to learn that ours was a reformation concerning root issues--the chief one was the emphasis on a lay fellowship in contradistinction to a hierarchy of leaders invested with authority and power." It is interesting to note that Pat Lichti, who grew up outside the Mennonite Church, specifically mentions nonviolence as one of the reasons for her membership. She stated, "I feel the basic beliefs of the Mennonite Church are the same ones that I believe in--such as nonviolence. . . ."

One of the older members made specific mention of the reputation for honesty and integrity that Mennonites used to have as being important to him. He said, "Being a Mennonite in the past was considered in many instances as good as a man's signature."

Worship

While there was a strong emphasis upon fellowship with the members of the church as a reason for joining this congregation, there were only three persons who mentioned the aspect of a

relation to God as part of the reason for membership in the church. After pointing out that he had been reared in the church, Albert Schmidt said, "I remain here because I feel that God is here if we are ready to receive him." Jacob Brandt wrote, "The prayers that are given are helpful to me. I enjoy the Sunday School and worship." Amanda Eitzen specifically mentioned communion, baptism and child dedication services as being meaningful. Then she adds, "The Sunday services are always an inspiration to me. I go home with a feeling of having spent time with the Lord in fellowship with fellow believers."

Only one person mentioned the type of service as being a reason for being a member. James Ruud stated, "I like the lack of pomp and show that a lot of churches seem to have nowadays."

In this connection we might also notice that three persons mentioned the pastor as part of their reason for being members. Jacob Brandt said, "I like our minister, the way he presents the Bible to us. When we are in need he is always ready to help us." Herman Rempel explained, "I feel that the minister and I feel the same about most religious thoughts and ideals." James Ruud made it a little more impersonal by saying, "I like the way the sermons are given, and I like the subject matter."

Outreach

Only four of the members mentioned the outreach of the church to others as significant for their membership. Amanda Eitzen made specific reference to the Christmas Bundle project

whereby members are able to share with needy children throughout the world. Herman Rempel generalized by saying that he belonged to the church because of its work for the physical as well as spiritual needs of the people of the world. James Ruud wrote, "I like the approach of the church body towards the pressing problems of our civilization: alcoholism, the narcotic problem, and a score of other sicknesses that plague the world." Pat Lichti mentioned that she appreciated the "outreach program throughout the nation and the world." She continued, "The Mennonite Church not only believes in these things, but actively takes a stand and speaks out for them."

Summary

Beginning with the items that were mentioned with the least frequency it is clear that the worship services of the church are not a primary reason for membership in First Mennonite. This can be explained by the fact that this activity of the church is not distinctive or different enough from other churches in the community to merit mentioning. Visitors frequently comment that the worship service is much like that which they experience in Methodist or Presbyterian Churches so that they feel right at home. Thus while the worship of God is an important activity of the church it cannot be looked upon as a major reason for the existence of the church.

Much the same could be said for the minister and his type of ministry. In recent years this office of the church has been

similar in pattern to other denominations in the community. There may also be the recognition that the First Mennonite Church cannot be built around the minister because in general they have served only from six to nine years. If the church were built upon the like or dislike of the minister, the church would be much weaker. This may be looked upon as a strength in the congregation. In a large church where there is a greater degree of anonymity the minister must be the reason for persons attending the worship service of the church. The church in such a situation is much more pulpit or minister centered. In the First Mennonite Church, while there is an appreciation for creative preaching, and while this would determine the attendance or non-attendance of some of the members, yet it is not a crucial factor in the life of the church at this point.

The outreach program of the church does not appear to be an essential reason for persons to be members of First Mennonite. Again in many ways it is not significantly different from what can be found in other churches. Only four of the fourteen referred to the program of outreach and the specific items of the program that were mentioned are not particularly unique. While the Mennonite Church as a whole has some quite distinctive programs of outreach and service, such as Disaster Service, yet this congregation has not participated in it. The congregation has had a few persons who have participated in the service projects of the General Conference in the past twenty years, but the depth of interest has not been great. Thus the distinctive

programs of the church have not been of such a nature that they would draw persons into the membership.

The two reasons that stand out as being significant for membership are family connections and fellowship. These two reasons are inter-related and they are characteristics that are distinctive of this church. Family ties cannot be duplicated nor can the persons within the church with whom one has established deep relationships. The fact that there is much inter-relatedness through family ties makes this fellowship a close-knit one. And when we realize, as Hubert Bonner says, "that the group in whatever form--whether large or small, informal, or institutionalized--molds an individual's attitudes, behavior, personality, and any psychological variable"¹ then we can understand why this congregation gives members a sense of being "at home." This is all the more true in the light of the fact that approximately a fourth of the active members have been members of the congregation for fifty years or more.

Because of the emphasis upon family connections and fellowship, one could have anticipated that more of the group would have mentioned that their relationship to the church stemmed in part from a concern for their children. The probable reason for so few giving this as a reason is that the majority of persons in the discussions either had children who were already grown or who were already members. The two that did give

¹Hubert Bonner, Group Dynamics: Principles and Applications (New York: Ronald Press, 1959), p. 415.

this as a reason had a concern for their children who were not members or for grandchildren who were not within the church.

If the above evaluation is correct then it is possible to place the matter of beliefs in clearer perspective. Beliefs were mentioned by several as a significant reason for their being members. But it appears likely that beliefs and the way of life within the fellowship have been so integrated that they cannot be easily separated. Few mentioned any specific belief as being significant. It would, therefore, appear that the pattern of life, which includes blood relationships, folkways, habits and beliefs have all gone into the making up of what is significant in the life of the members. Few, if any, of the members have joined the church solely because of the beliefs of the church. In critical situations several have been held in the church by the beliefs when the fellowship was strained or worn thin. Then beliefs seemed to be more important in holding persons within the church. It is probably significant that persons who have joined the church have been, in the main, a part of the fellowship--through birth, inter-marriage, or deep friendship--before they joined the church.

These conclusions will need to be tested against the more considered responses that were given in the group discussion of the mission of the church in the next section.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

What a church conceives itself to be and what it does in its life generally have a high degree of correlation. The theology of the church and the mission of the church are integrally related. On this assumption an attempt was made to have members of the First Mennonite Church of Upland reflect upon four conceptions or models of the church as a basis on which they could define their own conception of the church and its mission. (See Appendix E) The discussion that followed frequently referred to one of the four models as members sought to answer the question: What is the mission of our church today? Frequently questions were posed to the group on the basis of one of the four models to help them define their own concepts. The discussions were recorded and later transcribed. The quotations are given verbatim in their natural roughness. In analysing the discussion the affinity or difference expressed with reference to each of the four models will be surveyed. Following this a definition of the concept of mission expressed by the two groups will be attempted.

The Church Focused Church

The Church under this rubric has as its basis the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. The place of worship and preaching in the life of the congregation was raised with both groups. There was no inclination to see these activities as forming the basis of the church. When mention was made of worship it was generally in the pietistic sense of

personal inspiration. No one in the two groups said, for instance that the purpose of the First Mennonite Church was to hear the Word of God and to participate in the Sacraments. It was only through questioning that their reaction to these aspects of the life of the church were looked at at all. It appeared that the group saw these as functions of the church and not ingredients that go to make up the church.

When asked about the importance of baptism and communion, Albert Schmidt replied, "When you are baptized you make a vow between yourself and God to follow His ways as near as you can. When you take communion you renew it, rededicate yourself." When asked if this was an activity just between himself and God, he replied, "Primarily. However it will effect the rest of your fellow members and everybody you come in contact with."

Nettie Cooley said that "renewal" was the primary value of participation in worship. She said, "You can read your Bible and pray at home, but when you get together with other people in church, its a renewal, a rededication." To this Amanda Eitzen responded, "Whatever it is, I miss it if I haven't been here." Nettie added, "Whatever it is, it makes me feel good." Amanda also said that participation in the communion service made her "happy" and that it gave her "an inner peace." Roy Cabe wondered whether the purpose of the church was to give a person "satisfaction--sanctuary from worries and what not?" Worship according to these expressions is not primarily the praise of God but the renewal of the worshipper.

In reflecting on their past experiences in the church, several persons expressed the feeling that worship and Bible study had been the primary experiences of the church. These experiences had not been too meaningful because they had been of a routine nature. Jacob Brandt recalled, "It used to be when we got to a certain age where we go to catechism, we naturally were baptized whether we were ready or not. We were baptized. Our folks requested it, and so we did." David Eitzen said, "I must confess that my baptism did not mean too much to me. I went through the paces, but I had my more personal experience later on, about a year or two afterwards." Grace Boshart was willing to give her parents a larger amount of credit when she asked, "But didn't our folks take a little more interest in us during the catechism and do some instructing at home?" Baptism and church membership according to these responses fit the pattern of the institutional church or that of the established sect more than it does of the sect which places an emphasis upon a radical change in life's dimensions when one becomes a church member.

It may be that the members of the group were under estimating the value of their experiences as they did not recognize their own youthful problem of becoming persons in their own right who needed to be related to the church. David Eitzen spoke of his parents dedicating him to the work of the church before he was born. What was meaningful to the parents took some time before it became meaningful to the children. The fact that these persons are within the church today should say something about

the experiences they had in the past. Yet they seemed to be saying that the experiences they did have did not coincide with baptism or to a programmed activity. It is fairly clear that this model of the church did not reflect the image the group had of the First Mennonite Church.

The Person Focused Church

The person focused Church sees its primary mission as the saving of souls. Both of the groups gave quite a lot of time to discussing evangelism in the life of the church. This may be accounted for by the fact that the two General Conference Churches that are closest lay a heavy stress upon this function of the church. It may also stem in part from the fact that the pastor has been encouraging the church to do more in this area. When asked if there were those in the congregation who liked this type of church the answers were: "Some of the older ones maybe"; "No, not a great amount"; and "There might be a couple interested in that." Chris Krehbiel offered, "There's a few that have left the church on account of that, that our thinking was not evangelical enough."

David Eitzen reflected, "As I looked at the history of the church, when they first started this church it was a matter of gathering people of a Mennonite background together into a fellowship." Grace Boshart suggested that this was primarily a "social" gathering that had a religious aspect. In discussing the history of the church it was pointed out that the church had

participated in city-wide revival meetings when evangelists from outside the community were invited to hold meetings. When asked if our church had ever benefited from these meetings by obtaining converts, Grace Boshart answered, "I don't think that we ever even thought of that, that we were trying to get them as [members] . . ." She also said that the community had been well churched and that almost everyone attended some place or other. Then she added, "And I don't know if we were too concerned about those who didn't. I can't remember just too much about going out or thinking too much about it."

David Eitzen asked about the community revival meetings that were held, "Were there members who were deeply agonizingly concerned about some people, or young people, that they might come to these meetings and have this unique experience that they didn't expect them to have in our church?" Albert Schmidt responded by saying, "I remember that for collection plates they had tin pans so they would rattle." This humorous response probably says as much about the church's involvement in the meetings as any other statement could.

Clarence Dowding seemed to reflect the attitude of the congregation on evangelism and the saving of souls when he mentioned that he had seen Billy Graham on television recently. Twice he raised the question, "I wonder about the lasting effect." While he was willing to state, "Of course, if a thousand came forward and ten were won to Christ it would be worth it." He then added, "But this is such a mass production

situation I can't get too enthused about it."

There was concern shown by some that the church has not been growing in numbers. As Chris Krehbiel expressed it, "The concern is, why aren't we growing? What is keeping the public that go to all these other churches, why aren't they coming to us? That's the question that bothers me. I think that we have just as good a minister, we have just as good services here at this church as they have at any of the other churches. But why? Is it the name Mennonite that bothers the people that they're not coming?" In another group David Eitzen raised the point, "But aren't we doomed to extinction, I mean numerically? I don't like the promotional approach, but on the other hand if you don't do something promotion wise to get numbers, aren't we going to die out?" While lack of growth was seen as a problem, evangelism narrowly conceived and of an emotional type was not seen as the answer to their situation.

In trying to phrase a statement about the approach the church should take in seeking growth, Grace Boshart suggested that if we have fellowship with God and with those within the church that this in turn would lead us to bring others into the fellowship. "It should be a natural process of growth," was her feeling. Along a similar vein Chris Krehbiel added, "If you don't live your Christian life and let your light shine for them during the week, you can never get them into the church. It's your weekly behavior and weekly activities that they have with you that's going to bring them into the church." Nettie Cooley

questioned this statement as did David Eitzen. He said, "We talk about how we are the leaven in the lump among the people, and they recognize us as good Joes. But how many people, thereby, from the standpoint of keeping our own church alive, how many people are even attracted to come to our services. And how many people, thereby, really want to then ultimately join our church?" This realistic appraisal of the problem did not lead to any further solutions or directions in terms of evangelism.

The question was raised about our mission to those in our immediate community of Mexican heritage. Amanda Eitzen recalled, "I've heard some people say that they didn't want these people living next door to them. . . . And I am afraid that if they wanted to join this church they would not be accepted." Roy Cabe suggested, "We're more prejudiced than we'd like to admit." Herman Rempel differed, "I think that the majority of people would accept them, the biggest majority would. And I think it's about time our church let the people, the non-caucasian people, know that the church is open to anybody." Chris Krehbiel suggested that if a negro came to our church that "we would be doing them a favor to send them down to this Sultana church rather than to get them into our church. They're still in church, it doesn't have to be a Mennonite Church." It appeared that part of this feeling stemmed from the thought that they would not feel at home with us. James Ruud wondered, "Do you think a negro would care for the type of service we have? Don't you think that it might be a little watered down?"

It is clear from the discussion that the church has anxiety about not growing. The anxiety does not stem from a feeling that persons in the community are dying without being saved, rather it is more of a fear that the church itself might die. The members in the discussion showed clearly by their statements that they accepted persons in other churches as Christians and that they saw First Mennonite as being in competition with them. There was a brief casting about for solutions to the problem but no adequate one was proposed. There seemed to be a feeling on the part of some that if we could find the right technique then we would have the solution. But not just any technique or method is going to be accepted. The church has deep feelings about what are inappropriate methods. The typical approach of the person centered churches was not seen as the model for this church. Roy Cabe seemed to summarize the feeling of the church as a whole when he said, "I think too often in this outreach affair--of other people--right off the bat they get the idea that we feel better. . . . I would rather look at it that we travel on the same road, not that we're up in the Cadillac and passing out a hand to the poor souls."

The Faithful Community

There was little comment or reaction to this model of the church. It was referred to explicitly only once and then in answer to a question whether we reflected this type of church. Herman Rempel suggested that the church in Reedley had a few of

these characteristics when he was a member there some twenty years ago. There appeared to be ambivalent feelings about the sectarian heritage of the church. Grace Boshart stated, "Sometimes we get a little stagnate in our past. This is the way we did it so and so many years ago, it is good enough now, that is the way we want it now." She also added affirmatively, "I'm not too sure that we are getting away from the basic beliefs." Later Dowding was speaking about change and said, "I don't think that on main issues of principle the church is changing to any degree, but maybe on side issues." What the main issues and side issues are were not explored, nor whether the basic beliefs and principles of today are the same as those of the Mennonite Church at its beginning. It probably would be correct to say that the group felt that while this was the model for the church of reformation times, it is not the model for the church today.

There appeared to be a recognition that the sense of being the Faithful Community deeded to the Mennonite Church a strong in-group feeling. The years of persecution that followed the beginning of the church reinforced this sense of separation and since then it has gone to seed. Grace Boshart asked whether our lack of involvement with other people was "a hang-over from the days when they used to have to be more or less in hiding?" Speaking of our church as it is today Jacob Brandt said, "There's too much of a clique here." David Eitzen suggested that we have been "sealed off" or "shelled in." When the discussion leader suggested that instead of having a tight wall around us we would

like to have windows, David Eitzen suggested that we should have the "doors open." Later in the discussion when it was suggested that we feel that there are many persons in other churches who are Christians and that there are even Christians outside the churches, Dowding replied, "I wouldn't have joined if it had been like that," i.e., closed up. Thus First Mennonite rejects several aspects of the model of the church as a Faithful Community.

The World Centered Church

There was some response to this model within the groups. Grace Boshart said in evaluating our church, "We try very hard to be in that fourth category." Generally there was no specific reference to this model as there had been to the first two. The reason may be that the First Mennonite Church has not reflected this aspect of life as much as it has the first two models. The participation of the church in the life of the community has been mainly in terms of the concepts of the first two presentations. A discussion of this model of the church will have more relevance when the church meets to discuss what its mission should be in the future.

The Present Mission of the First Mennonite Church

In the discussion of the two groups representing the Church Council of the First Mennonite Church, the definition of the church's nature and mission was not approached in an objective and impersonal manner. The question implicitly asked

was: What does the church do for me? or, What have I experienced in the church? In other words the question arose in its subjective and personal form. In defining the church Herman Rempel said, "I think that the church is this group right here, meeting together, talking together." Another time he said, "We try to bring people into this certain organization, and I don't think that this is the church. . . . I just do not feel that it is absolutely essential that they join this body, this group right here." In other words the Church is more than any particular organization, and being a Christian is more than being a member of a church organization. David Eitzen held to much the same idea when he added, "I put a lot of stock by the expression 'where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am,' and I think that we find God in various ways, but particularly in involved interaction with fellowmen."

The church as a family. The concept of the church as a family came through very strongly and it gives us a model for conceptualizing this congregation and its mission. The discussion in one group began in this direction when mention was made of the fact that the young people are asked to write out a statement of faith which they read to the congregation before becoming members. In writing their statements they involve their parents in their questions and decisions. David Eitzen's comment was that this process made the statement a "personal matter. . . and a family concern." It was suggested that the procedure by which persons become members of the church is

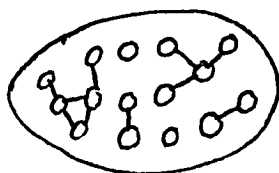
"somewhat akin to birth into a family." Clarence Dowding's response was, "To a degree, right." Another responded, "Sounds right." Along this same line David Eitzen commented, "We're a family of families." When asked how they felt about this, whether it was good, Dowding affirmed, "Definitely." David Eitzen elaborated, "I'd say its very good, unless it means that we restrict it--that we are not open to people."

David Eitzen, in particular, brought out this aspect of the church as a family. While recognizing that he was not related, bloodwise to many of the members of the church, he could say, "I feel we are personally enough involved with many families of the church that in many ways I feel as though I were a cousin or something like that." Another time he said, "The kingdom of God probably today would be better described as the family of God than the kingdom." But he added a critical comment about First Mennonite later by saying, "It looks as though if your're not born into this heritage, your're just not prone to become a member of it." Having a facility for expressing the feelings of a group these comments probably reflect more than his own personal attitudes.

When asked to define the mission or purpose of the church Nettie Cooley made the first attempt by saying, "The children that we have--our children--we want to give them a rich Christian heritage." She was not quite satisfied with the word heritage and neither were several of the others. Roy Cabe commented, "Heritage reminds me of ancestors and the past." The phrase was

then changed so that it read, "To give our children a rich experience in Christian living." When asked if this was our primary mission, Nettie Cooley responded, "No, that is just one of the reasons." But the fact that it was mentioned first seems to indicate that it is primary. This was corroborated by additional comments throughout the discussions.

The church as a family could be diagramed in the following manner:



The larger circle represents the church and the smaller ones the individual families. Many of the families are inter-related and so have connecting ties. A few are not related and so stand alone. Thus far the dominating mission of the church is seen as bringing up the children in the faith of the parents and keeping them within the church.

The church as a redeeming fellowship. One of the discussion groups began defining the church's mission as bringing persons into "fellowship with God and an awareness that we are all sinners and want forgiveness." There was general agreement that this formed one of the bases of the church. It appeared to be such a basic assumption that there was little discussion about it. However, when this point is viewed in the light of the discussion of evangelism it appears that the persons to be brought into this fellowship and awareness are largely those with Mennonite background. Not that this has been restricted by

definition. There are members who have made efforts to bring others into the church, but the church as a whole has not engaged in such a program.

The church today is seeing its mission in terms of people beyond the immediate Mennonite fellowship. Grace Boshart said that the mission of the church is to have a concern--spiritually, physically, mentally--for others who are not within the church. Herman Rempel in another group defined the church's reason for existence as "love for our fellowmen." Nettie Cooley emphasized that this was both a privilege and a responsibility. Roy Cabe was concerned at first that we not set aside as a purpose the inner peace and satisfaction that comes through worship. But as he thought about it he suggested, "Maybe if you do all of these things [helping others, etc.] you'll have all of this [peace and satisfaction]."

It has been noted that the church has always supported mission work abroad. But the feeling was definitely expressed that the church needs to do more than help those abroad. Herman Rempel emphasized this by saying, "This is one of the things that I feel our group here in this church needs to realize; that the people around us right here need to be helped. . . . This is very important that the church be . . . in the world." Marguerite Johnson recalled that a member of the church said he thought we should do more at home and then worry about people elsewhere. This may be a reflection of the prevailing anti-foreign aid feeling among part of the people in the nation. But

it is also a clue that there is an awareness that more needs to be done with the neighbors of the community.

The church is not clear as yet as to its stance in relation to the world. The church has not functioned as an organization expressing concern about the world. What concern has been shown has been done on an individual basis with little support from the group as a whole. The church has tended to be an enclave within the world. While there are those who are satisfied with this stance, others are ready to try new roles in the light of their greater understanding of the world and the church. No definite conception has come forth as yet.

The church as Mennonite. Another aspect that was brought into the definition of the mission of the church was the history and heritage of the First Mennonite Church. There was a consensus among both groups that the Mennonite Church as a whole has something distinctive to offer to the world that other churches do not have. Just what this distinctive thing is was difficult for the groups to define. They did not offer any specific doctrine or practice as symbolic of the church. It seemed to be wrapped up in part with the characteristic of being a family church. It is something that is carried along, a way of life. David Eitzen twice characterized it as a "flavor." It is a quality of emphasis and outlook on life. He felt that the spirit and motivation of the Mennonites was such that it could be easily detected. Nettie Cooley, in a different group from

Eitzen, said somewhat the same thing. She said, "I feel that as a Mennonite Church we have a wonderful background, maybe something to give to the world which, maybe, other people haven't." It is interesting to note that she qualified the statement twice. Whether this was out of modesty for the Mennonites or out of doubt is hard to determine. When pressed to say what this difference was she said it was "a concern for all people." James Ruud questioned whether other churches did not have the same thing. To this Nettie replied, "Well, I think ours is a little different."

Along this same line, Mennonites have generally felt that when young people moved out of the community and joined other churches that they were "lost" to the church. David Eitzen suggested that they should be looked upon as "missionaries" carrying the distinctive quality, the Mennonite spirit, into other churches. Grace Boshart also noted the fact that there were many former Mennonites in other denominations throughout the country. In speaking about them she said, "They're still Mennonites--I mean, maybe influencing others. I've often wondered though, isn't our loss to other churches, is that really such a bad thing?" The question in her statement may have come from the realization that not all former Mennonites have been concerned about manifesting any peculiar quality of life. It may have come from a sense of loss as well. Thus modesty and a question mark seems most appropriate in speaking about the effect of these people upon other churches.

David Eitzen proposed a statement of purpose for the mission of the church in one group. Basically he said that through our fellowship we should become more aware of the purpose of God and of the love of God in the here and now with the realization that this changes from day to day and year to year so that we can remain relevant for tomorrow, as well as for today. All of this is to be done in keeping with our heritage from the past. This statement, arising out of the discussion, sought to relate the specific experiences of the Mennonites to the broader Christian experiences. It seemed to summarize the feeling of the members in the discussion that to step out of their heritage would be to deny the past out of which they have come. This would be as harmful to the group as it would be for an individual to reject his parents and the community that formed his life. Such a denial on the part of the church would be to reject all that God has accomplished through the church in the past. But a basic question that is unanswered is what aspects of the heritage are relevant and how they are to be utilized in the present situation?

Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis of the discussion it can be said that there are three elements to the present mission of the church. Looming large in the overall picture is the concern to be a family fellowship of Christians dedicated to continuing the faith. Secondly, there is the desire to continue to find meaning

in life, individually and corporately, in fellowship with God and in service to the neighbor. Service in the community is seen as an area that needs to receive increasing attention. The third part of the mission is to be a Mennonite Church. In being a Mennonite Church it is not the heritage itself that is receiving the central focus. The church is not seeking to be an Anabaptist church. It is seeking to perpetuate a Christian style of life in the present situation that has elements derived from the Anabaptist heritage.

It is significant to note that when seeking to define the distinctive characteristics of the Mennonite Church there was no one who pointed to the type of characteristics that Troeltsch observed in the Anabaptists or that Harold Bender outlined in "The Anabaptist Vision." The distinctiveness is now seen to be a way of life that is best described as a "flavor" or "concern." It appears that the distinctiveness is almost synonymous with being born a Mennonite. It is akin to the individuality of a person within a family. Each member has his own uniqueness.

In Chapter II it was concluded that the First Mennonite Church can still be designated an established sect if judged by the criterion of its inclusiveness of general society. Yinger had suggested that sects which grappled with the evils in society became established sects. Then as they take on the values of the culture around them they move in the direction of the status of a denomination. Judging from the responses in the discussion the First Mennonite Church is functioning very much as

a denomination even though it continues to have an established sect image.

Comparing the responses of the discussion with the responses on the essays we find that the conclusions drawn from the essays have been strongly corroborated in the discussion. They both emphasize the fellowship and family ties as central to the existence of the church. Worship and fellowship with God came out more clearly as a purpose of the church as did the outreach aspect. However, this latter aspect of mission has not been clearly drawn.

III. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have sought to determine the present mission of the First Mennonite Church of Upland as it is envisioned by members of the Church Council. This was learned by having them write a brief essay on the reasons for their membership in the First Mennonite Church, and by having them engage in a discussion on the mission of the church.

The essays were analyzed first and a preliminary definition of the mission of the church was attempted on the basis of the analysis. Then the discussions were examined and in the light of this further study a clearer definition was attempted. It was seen that the mission of the church consists of maintaining the religious fellowship of the families through worship and through efforts to bring the children into the church. These are coupled with a growing desire to be of help to the people in

the community as well as to the world in general. This mission is fulfilled with the recognition that the church lives and speaks out of its Mennonite heritage.

In the next chapter we shall make a demographic study of the active resident members of the congregation to determine the characteristics of the congregation. A second part of the study will seek to determine the extent to which the congregation still holds to some of the distinctive beliefs of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROFILE OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

In the first part of this chapter we shall make a demographic study of the membership of the First Mennonite Church of Upland to obtain a profile of the strengths and weaknesses of the congregation. We shall observe such features as the age and sex ratio, length of membership, place of residence in relation to the church building, educational attainment, and occupations. In the second section of the chapter we shall make a study of the extent to which the First Mennonite Church holds to the norms of Anabaptism. Some of these norms can no longer be considered sectarian in nature as they are indigenous to the denominations in America. The norms that are considered sectarian will be of particular interest when we seek to project the mission of the church for the future in Chapter V.

I. THE POPULATION PROFILE

The membership of the First Mennonite Church of Upland on January 1, 1966 was 230. Of this number 42 were non-resident members. Of the 188 resident members another 36 have been inactive as they have not attended the services of the church nor contributed to the financial program of the church. This means that there are a total of 152 active, resident members. These members vary in age from fourteen to ninety-seven. In addition

to these are 49 children of the member families who regularly attend the Sunday School and worship services of the congregation. These children, together with the active resident members of the church make up a total population of 201. There are also a few non-members, both children and adult, who attend the services of the church. Since they are not many in number, comprising less than 20, they have not been included in the study of the church.

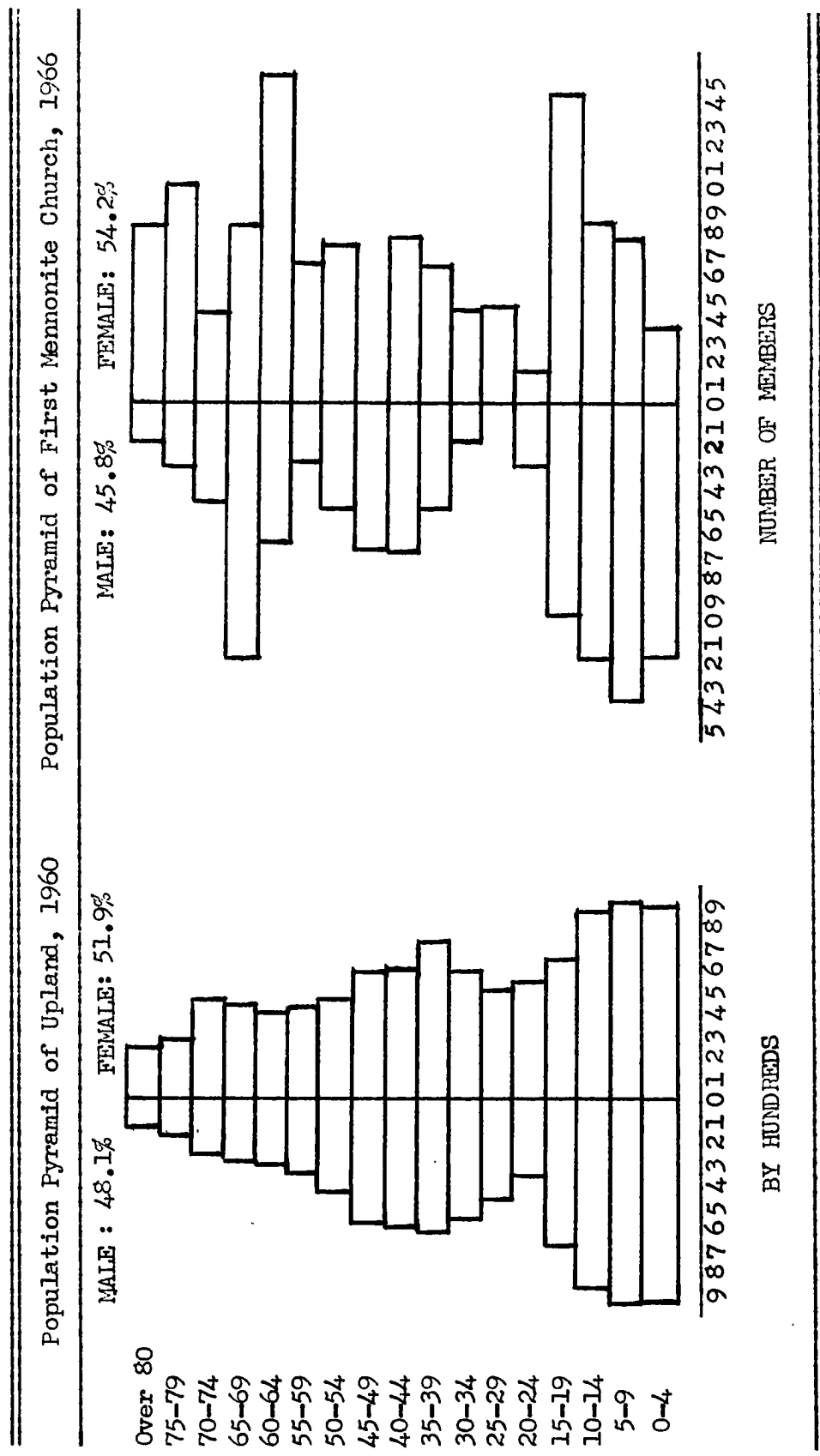
Table II is a study of the age and sex of the population of the city of Upland, and of the active resident members of the First Mennonite Church. The figures for the city have been taken from the 1960 United States Census of Population.¹ The pyramid of the church shows the distribution of the age and sex of the 152 active resident members and of their 49 children who are not members.

The population pyramid of Upland shows the city as of 1960 to be a fairly typical suburban area. The large proportion of children to the rest of the population indicates that families make their residence in Upland. Even though southern California is noted for its attractiveness to retired persons, there are not a large number of elderly persons living in Upland. The large proportion of persons between the ages of 30 and 50, along with the large number of children, show that families have been moving into Upland and make up the bulk of the population.

The pyramid of the First Mennonite Church is obviously not

¹United States Census of Population, 1960. U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census.

TABLE II
COMPARATIVE POPULATION PYRAMIDS OF UPLAND AND THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH



representative of the community. Actually only sixty of the 152 active members live within the boundaries of Upland. While the profile of the city of Upland is a fair triangle, the profile of the church shows two large bulges--one for the children and one for the older members. Of the total members active in the life of the church 23.8 per cent are 65 years of age and over. In the total membership there are 27 persons who have been members of the church 50 years or more. The children under 14, who are not baptized members, account for 26.3 per cent of the population. Together these comprise 50.1 per cent of the total active persons. There is quite a gap in the 20-35 age group. This can be accounted for in two ways. The one is that several of the younger members of the church are away at school or have married and left the community. The church has noted such losses for years. Another reason for this lack of numbers in this area is the large number of older persons who are either single or childless. There are 13 single ladies and four single men who are active resident members. Also there are six couples that are childless.

The church is somewhat heavy on the female side of the pyramid with two exceptions. There are more males than females in the age group 65 to 69 and again in the 0-14 age group. If it were not for these exceptions the disproportion would be very marked. There are 129 active members over the age of 20. Of these 80 are female which is 62 per cent. A high proportion of the 80 women are single or widowed. There are 13 single ladies

and 21 widows.

In a preliminary way it can be reasoned that the church is not in a very strong position to continue because of the lack of strength in the 20 to 50 age area. There is one sign of hope, however. This is the large number of children that are in the congregation now. Yet this is an unknown quantity in the light of the fact that persons today are very mobile. Mennonites are no exception to this as we can see in the next table.

II. MEMBERSHIP GAINS AND LOSSES

We have already noted an area of weakness in the membership profile of the First Mennonite Church. An important question for the congregation is: what have been the trends in accessions and baptisms in the history of the congregation? We shall first of all chart the accessions by decades.

TABLE III
TOTAL ACCESSIONS AND BAPTISMS BY DECADES

Decade	Total Received	Total Baptized
1903-1912	204	47
1913-1922	161	71
1923-1932	137	52
1933-1942	152	70
1943-1952	195	42
1953-1962	63	20
1963-1966	41	27

In Table III we note that the number of accessions remained high until 1953. The previous decade showed the second highest number of accessions of the six. However the number of baptisms were lower in that year than in the previous four decades. This may reflect the smaller number of children born during the depression. It is probably also due to the fact that several couples who would have been bearing children during these years were childless. The 1953-1962 decade shows a drastic drop in the number of accessions. It fell to less than a third over the previous decade and the number of baptisms were only half of what the previous decade had produced. The number of children in the congregation must have been greatly reduced, but for some reason there were not the number of adult accessions. According to Table I, page 41, the number of persons of non-Mennonite background joining the church during the decade was practically the same as the previous one. Thus we must conclude that the number of Mennonites moving into the area must have decreased, or that they were not attracted to the church if they did move into the area. From what is known of the Mennonites in the area, it is most likely that Mennonites have not been moving into Upland so that the First Mennonite Church cannot look in this direction for any growth in membership. What had once been a strong source for members has now greatly diminished.

If the First Mennonite Church cannot look to migrating Mennonites for growth in membership, one wonders what the chances for internal growth are. This we can ascertain by a study of the

source of members and of the loss of members. Table IV shows us what has occurred during the most recent ten year period. From this we can with some probability predict what may transpire in the next decade if the trend that is shown would continue.

TABLE IV
ANALYSIS OF THE SOURCES OF MEMBERS AND OF THE LOSS OF MEMBERS
1955-1964

Members Received		
By Baptism		
Children of members of the Church	20	
Parents were non-Mennonites	4	
Parents were non-church	<u>5</u>	29
By Letter of Transfer		
From another General Conference Church	26	
From other Mennonite Churches	0	
From non-Mennonite Churches	<u>22</u>	48
Total Received		<u>77</u>
Members Lost		
By Death	45	
Transferred to other General Conference Churches	9	
Transferred to other Mennonite Churches	3	
Transferred to non-Mennonite Churches	63	
Discontinued for other reasons	<u>14</u>	
Total Loss		<u>134</u>
Net Loss		<u>57</u>

The trend for the ten year period shown in Table IV is not encouraging for the church. There was an average net loss of 5.7 members per year. And while the church gained a total of 31

members from outside the Mennonite fold, it lost 63, or twice as many, to other denominations during the same period. Also death took 50 per cent more members than were received by baptism. While the large number of children currently in the congregation gives hope that the number of baptisms will be able to offset the number of deaths due to the large number of older members in the church, unless there are more members received from the community the church cannot expect to grow in size because of the number of persons moving out of the community.

III. LENGTH OF MEMBERSHIP

In studying the life of a congregation it is also instructive to know the age distribution of the long-time and recent members. In such a study one is able to see what age groups are attracted to the congregation and what age groups are influential in the life of the group. Table V shows in graph form this age distribution. In this table we have shown both resident and non-resident active members. There are a total of 175 active members out of the 230 members in the church on January 1, 1966.

The first two periods shown are of twenty-five years each. It is to be expected that there would be only older persons in column one. There are 53 members who have been in the church prior to 1928. This makes up 30 per cent of the active membership. The surprising thing is that the largest number of persons in this span of time are over the age of 70. This seems to indicate that the younger members tend to move.

TABLE V
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF LONG-TIME AND RECENT ACTIVE MEMBERS

PRESENT ACTIVE MEMBERS UNITING WITH THE CHURCH:					
Age	Prior to 1928	1928- 1953	1953- 1966	Present Active Membership	Per Cent
Over 70	<div>23</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>31</div>	17.7
60-69	<div>20</div>	<div>21</div>	<div>5</div>	<div>46</div>	26.3
50-59	<div>10</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>3</div>	<div>23</div>	13.1
40-49		<div>8</div>	<div>11</div>	<div>19</div>	10.9
30-39		<div>14</div>	<div>8</div>	<div>22</div>	12.6
20-29		<div>3</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>13</div>	7.4
14-19			<div>22</div>	<div>22</div>	12.6
Total	53	59	63	175	
Per Cent	30	33	37	100	

During the second twenty-five years of the church's life-- 1928 to 1953--there are only six more members active than from the first twenty-five years. In this second period one would expect to find the largest number of members coming from the younger age group. However there are only three persons in the 20-29 age group. This means there was quite a loss. The loss of members from the whole period is great. Comparing this table with Table III we note that the largest number of baptisms came between the years 1933-1942. There were 70 baptisms during that decade. The age group 40-49 roughly corresponds to that decade. Out of the 70 persons baptized and 82 received by letter there are only 8 who are active members today. There were a total of 138 persons baptized during the second twenty-five year history of the church and only 12 are currently active.

In the third column with a span of fourteen years, we find a fairly normal graph. The largest number of members are in the lower part of the graph. During these years there were a total of 48 persons baptized. Most of these were youth. But again we find only 32 persons between the ages of 14 and 29. As soon as the young members are old enough to leave for school or get married they begin to leave the church.

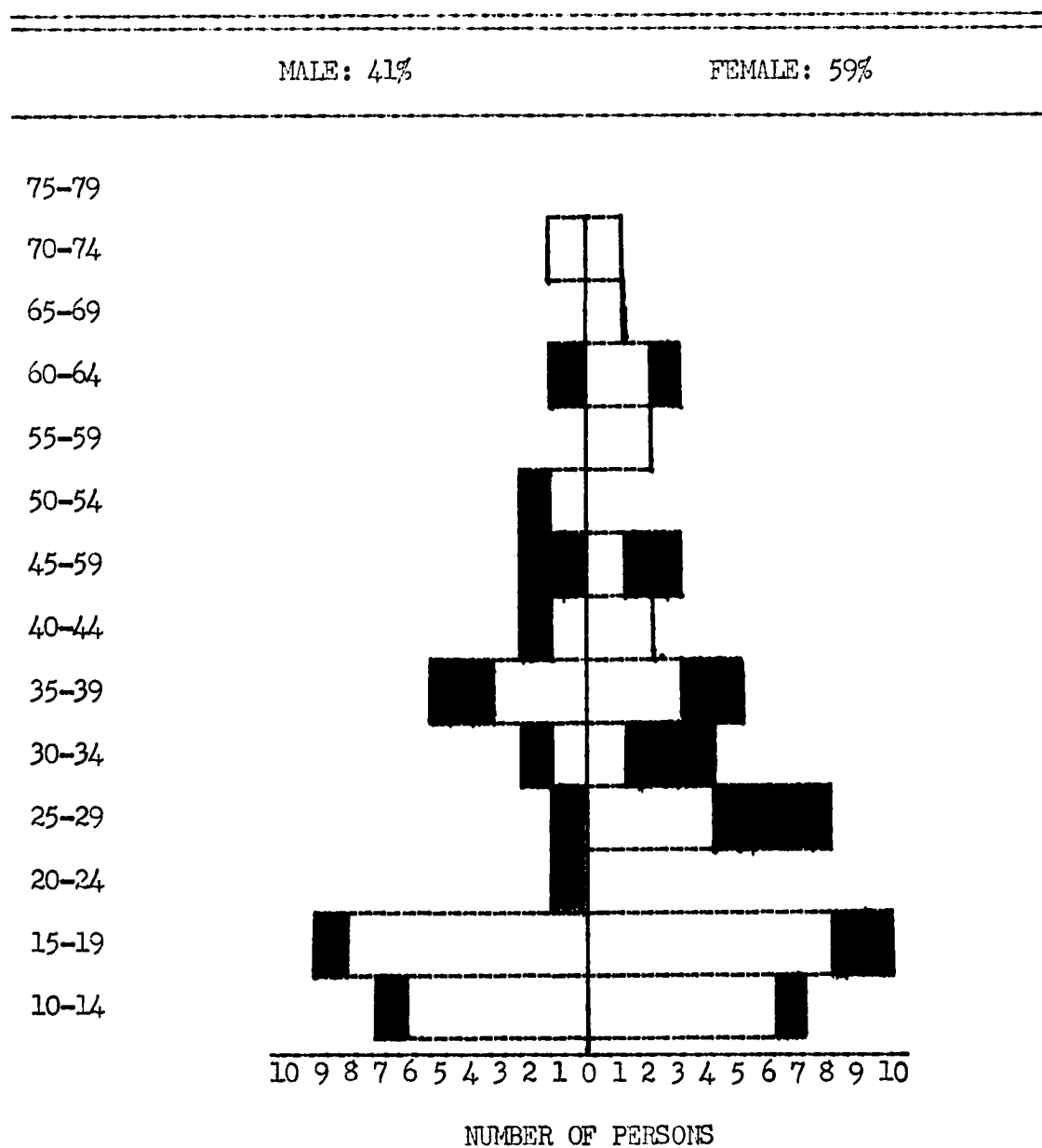
In the fourth column we have the total picture of the church. The strength of the congregation is clearly seen to be with the older members. A total of 44 per cent of the 175 active members are in the ages of 60 and above. Our earlier preliminary observation that the congregation is not in a position to carry

on with much strength has been strongly supported by these additional observations. The lack of strength in the 20 to 50 age group is a serious sign. The lack of stability in membership in previous years can give no hope that the situation will change in the years immediately ahead.

Further evidence pointing in the same direction comes from Table VI which charts the age and sex of members received over the most recent ten year period, 1957-1966. A total of 79 persons of all ages were received as members. Forty-one per cent of these were male and 59 per cent were female. The largest number of persons are in the 10-19 age bracket. There are 33 within this group. But there were 46 persons above the age of 20 who were received as members. In other words, 58 per cent of the persons received in the ten year period were not children reared in the church, but adults who moved into the community or persons from the community who were brought into the church. In earlier decades the number received by letter were up to three times the number received by baptism. During the past decade the number is considerably less than double.

Just as serious as the lower number of adults being brought into the church is the loss of older members who have been brought into the church. These are shown by the darkened portion of the lines. Of the 79 persons received in the ten year period, 25 are no longer active or have left the church. This is 31 per cent. The loss from the youth who have joined is not great. Only 5 of the 33 received have become inactive in

TABLE VI
AGE OF MEMBERS RECEIVED 1957-1966



Shaded area indicates inactive members or members who have left the congregation.

the ten year period. But the loss of 20 of the 46 older members is more serious. A study of these persons show that six transferred because they moved out of the community. Four joined churches in the area. Of these two were former refugees who joined a church made up of people from their native country. Three persons were removed from membership. Two of these were at the request of the persons because of their unhappiness with the church. The other seven members in the total became inactive for a variety of reasons. From this we conclude that the church has found it difficult to retain persons as members once they have joined. A sizeable group have become inactive or have moved to other churches in the community. Fourteen of the twenty who are no longer active are still living in the area. There is no one reason for their inactivity, but together these reasons add up to a problem of continuing membership to the First Mennonite Church.

IV. PROXIMITY OF MEMBERS TO THE CHURCH

The strength of a congregation and its mission is related to the place of residence of the members. If members can get together frequently and easily, then they have the possibility for more interaction and joint activities. Table VII show the proximity to the church building of the members of the First Mennonite Church. Nearly half of the active resident members live within a four mile radius of the church.

Fifteen members live in a cluster in Alta Loma in the

TABLE VII
PROXIMITY OF MEMBERS TO CHURCH

RESIDENCE		PER CENT
Within one half mile of church		23.7
Within one mile		12.0
Within two miles		12.0
Within four miles		26.3
Within ten miles		14.0
Beyond ten miles		12.0

area where many of the early Mennonite settlers had citrus ranches. Other than that the majority of the members live within the boundaries of Upland. There are fifteen members scattered through Ontario. The large majority of the members live within easy driving range of the center of activity. There are four families that live beyond a fifteen mile radius of the church. These find it difficult to participate in any activities of the church except that of the Sunday morning worship service.

The spread of the members throughout the community gives the congregation a fairly wide contact. However, the majority of the members in Upland live within the older section of the city rather than in the new housing developments. This limits the contacts to the older residents of the city or to the type of person, frequently transient, who can best afford the type of older housing available in the area of the church.

V. THE EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE MEMBERS

In Table VIII we have the spread of the education level of the active resident members above the age of 25. This gives us a basis of comparison with the 1960 United States Census of the Upland community. That census does not give a division according to sex as has been done for the congregation. The median school year completed by the residents of Upland according to the census is 12.1. In the First Mennonite Church the median school year completed by the men is the same as that of the city, 12.1 For the women it is a little lower, 11.6. Together the First

Mennonite Church has just a little lower education level than the city as a whole.

It has been previously noted that the First Mennonite Church has a large proportion of older members. These for the most part have not had as much education as the younger members. Of those under the age of 55 a total of 66 per cent of the men have twelve years of high school or more than 76 per cent of the

TABLE VIII
EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE ACTIVE RESIDENT MEMBERS

Male					Female			
Grad. School	College	High School	Grade School		Grade School	High School	College	Grad. School
			1	Over 80	7	1		
			2	75-79	6	3	1	
		3	1	70-74	2		2	
2		4	5	65-69	5	1	2	
1		2	3	60-64	1	10	4	
		2		55-59		3	3	
	3	1		50-54		1	4	2
1	1	4		45-49				
3	1	2		40-44	1	2	3	1
	4			35-39		1	4	1
	1			30-34		1	3	
				25-29			4	
7	10	18	12	Total	22	23	30	4

women. Taking in all of the members above the age of twenty-five we find that 41 per cent have had schooling beyond the

twelfth grade while 53.6 per cent of the residents of Upland have more than the twelfth grade. Thus as a whole the First Mennonite's educational level is somewhat below that of the city.

VI. THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE MEMBERS

When the First Mennonite Church was begun in 1903 practically all of the male members of the congregation were citrus ranchers and the women were homemakers. Today the situation is changed and reflects the urbanization of the area. Of the men between the ages of 20 and 65 there are 51 per cent in white collar professions. The U. S. census of Upland shows 45 per cent of the employed men of the city in white collar professions. The same census of Upland has 25 per cent of the men in manufacturing industries. There are 7 men in First Mennonite in manufacturing industries which is 23 per cent of the total. There is very limited connection with ranching among the members today. There are two poultry ranchers, one full-time and one part-time citrus ranchers, and one citrus inspector. There are two retired members who spend part of their time in citrus orchards.

There are 49 women between the ages of 25 and 65. Of this number 7 are single and two are widows. Of the married ladies, 22 have children at home. Of this number there are 10 who have full-time jobs. Several of the others have part-time jobs. Thus 45 per cent of the mothers are working full-time. Among the 18 married women without children in the home there

are 9 who have full-time jobs. All but two of the single women below 65 years of age are working. Thus more than 50 per cent of the women below retirement age are working full time. The jobs that the women have are, for the most part, jobs that have required some skill and training. Only three of those working can be said to be doing menial labor. The most frequently held jobs are teaching, nursing, and secretarial work. There are more working in service oriented jobs than in primarily functional jobs.

VII. A SURVEY OF THE BELIEFS OF THE MEMBERS

In Chapter I our study of Anabaptism showed us that a distinctive body of beliefs formed this sixteenth century expression of the Church. The Mennonite Church, standing as the lineal descendant of the Anabaptists, still looks to this group for its source of identity. Thus it becomes crucial for a projection of the life of the First Mennonite Church to determine the extent to which it is still holding to distinctive Anabaptist beliefs. The following survey was devised to determine if the major Anabaptist beliefs are still held by the members of the church and the degree of acceptance or rejection by the various age groups in the church. The questionnaire consisted of a series of statements made by various Anabaptist leaders, or a summary of a particular belief. Eleven statements were used in this survey. In addition two other statements were added to determine the degree to which the church felt an urban or rural bias.

It must be admitted that while the statements reflect the faith of the Anabaptists several of the statements can also be said to be held by several denominations today. To date no study has been published on which of the beliefs of the Anabaptists might still be considered sectarian. It is being assumed, therefore, that those statements that are not commonly held by protestant churches are sectarian in nature and continue to give the Mennonite Church of today its separate identity. The statements and their sources are:

1. "One cannot and should not use force to compel anyone to accept the faith, for faith is a free gift of God."² This was the belief of the Swiss Brethren according to Heinrich Bullinger, the successor to Zwingli in Zurich.

2. "We are baptized because we have been regenerated by faith and the Word of God. Regeneration is not the result of baptism, but baptism the result of regeneration."³ This is a quotation from Menno Simons.

3. "No one can truly know Christ except he follows him in life."⁴ A quotation from Hans Denk, an Anabaptist leader.

²Quoted by Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptist Vision," in Guy F. Hersberger, ed., The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1957), p. 30.

³Harold S. Bender and John Horsch, Menno Simons' Life and Writings (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1944), p. 78.

⁴Quoted by Paul Peachey, "The Modern Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision," in Hersberger, Op. Cit., p. 328.

4. "Christ's church. . . must be a people separated from the world in doctrine, life and worship."⁵ A quotation from Menno Simons.

5. "It is evident that a congregation or church cannot continue in the salutary doctrine and in a blameless and pious life without the proper practice of discipline."⁶ A quotation from Menno Simons.

6. "Infant baptism is but a human invention, an opinion of men, a perversion of the ordinance of Christ."⁷ From Menno Simons.

7. "We seek and desire with yearning ardent hearts, that the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ and His apostles may be taught and preached throughout the world."⁸ From Menno Simons.

8. "The regenerated do not go to war nor fight. They are the children of peace who have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and know of no war."⁹ From Menno Simons.

9. "A Christian should be obedient to the government only in so far as the claims of the magistracy do no injury to the Christian's pursuit of the will of God."¹⁰ A summary by Robert Kreider.

⁵Bender and Horsch, Op. Cit., p. 74.

⁶Ibid., p. 86

⁷Ibid., p. 81.

⁸Ibid., p. 88.

⁹Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁰Robert Kreider, "The Anabaptists and the State," in Hershbarger, Op. Cit., p. 189.

10. "No Christian should bring suit in a court of law. The Christian should suffer patiently the loss of possessions or status rather than demand redress in the secular courts."¹¹ A summary by Robert Kreider.

11. We should refuse "to swear the civil oath on grounds of Christ's admonition: 'Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay.'"¹² A summary by Robert Kreider.

12. "Mennonites should direct their missionary efforts to rural areas where they are more familiar with the general conditions and the life of the people."¹³ A statement by J. Winfield Fretz.

13. "The big city is God's greatest gift to the American Mennonite Church in this generation."¹⁴ A quotation from John I. Smucker, a pastor in New York City.

A total of 63 responses to the questionnaire were used. Of these 9 are not members of the First Mennonite Church. Of the members there are 41 persons whose parents were Mennonites and 13 whose parents were not Mennonites. This separation was used to determine if the persons who have joined the church out of a different heritage were holding to beliefs that were non-Anabaptist in character. The persons who are members and partici-

¹¹Ibid., p. 193.

¹²Ibid., p. 192.

¹³Paul Peachey, The Church in the City (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1963), p. 80.

¹⁴John I. Smucker, "Mennonites Can Love the City," Builder, XIV (November 1964), 5.

pated in the questionnaire represent about one-third of the active membership of the church. The sheets were marked during a Sunday School class in most cases. A brief explanation of some of the statements was given prior to the marking. A tabulation of the results of the questionnaire according to categories follows.

TABLE IX
COMPOSITE SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON ANABAPTIST BELIEFS

	Members				Non-members Parents				Non-members Parents			
	Parents		Members		Non-Mennonites		Non-Mennonites		Non-Mennonites		Non-Mennonites	
	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1.	28	11	2		9	4			6	2		1
2.	17	24			6	6		1	2	5	2	
3.	23	20			6	8			3	5	1	
4.	14	16	7	4	3	6	3	1	1	2	5	
5.	10	15	11	2	1	10		1		6	2	
6.	12	24	2	1	4	7	1			7	1	
7.	29	11	1		9	4			3	2	1	1
8.	8	18	7		3	7	3				6	1
9.	8	27	4	1	3	7	2		1	2	4	1
10.	2	10	21	8	1	5	5	2			7	2
11.	8	19	10	2	1	8	4			2	5	
Total	159	195	65	18	46	72	18	5	16	33	34	6
Per- cent	35	43	12	4	32	50	13	3	16	33	34	6
12.		4	31	4		2	10	1			6	3
13.	1	13	19	3		6	5	1		1	3	3

TABLE X

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ANABAPTIST BELIEFS
SUMMARY FOR PERSONS AGES 14-20

	Members				Non-members				Non-members Parents Non-Mennonites			
	Parents		Members		Parents		Members		Parents		Non-Mennonites	
	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1.	5	1			6				2			
2.	2	4			2	4			2			
3.	5	1			2	4			2			
4.	1	4	1		1	4	1			2		
5.			4	1		1	5				2	
6.	2	4			3	3				2		
7.	4	2			4	2			2			
8.	4		1		2	2	1				1	1
9.	2	4			1	4	1		1	1		
10.			3	3	2		2	1			2	
11.	1	4	1		1	3	2			1	1	
Total	26	24	10	4	24	27	12	1	9	6	6	1
Per- cent	40	36	15	6	36	41	18	1	41	27	27	4
12.		1	3	1		2	5					2
13		3	1	1		3	2			1		1

TABLE XI

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ANABAPTIST BELIEFS
SUMMARY FOR PERSONS AGES 21-40

	Members Parents Mennonites				Members Parents Non-Mennonites				Non-members Parents Non-Mennonites			
	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1.	3	5			5				4	2		
2.	2	6			2	2		1		4	2	
3.	2	6			3	3			1	5		
4.	2	1	3	2	1	3	1		1		5	
5.	1	6				4		1		5	"Not under- stood"	
6.	2	4	1		2	2				5		
7.	4	3	1		4	1			1	2	1	
8.		3	3		3	2					5	
9.	1	5	2		2	1	1			1	4	
10.		1	5	2	1	2	2				4	2
11.		3	3	2		4	1			1	3	
Total	17	43	18	6	23	24	5	2	7	25	24	2
Per- cent	19	49	20	77	42	43	9	4	10	38	36	3
12.			6	1			4	1			5	1
13.		1	6	1		2	2	1			2	2

TABLE XII

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ANABAPTIST BELIEFS
SUMMARY FOR PERSONS AGES 41-60

	Members Parents Mennonites				Members Parents Non-Mennonites				Non-members Parents Non-Mennonites			
	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1.	5	2	1		3	1						1
2.	4	4			3	1				1		
3.	4	4			2	2					1	
4.	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	1				
5.	1	4	1	1	1	2				1		
6.	1	4	1	1	2	1	1				1	
7.	5	3			4							1
8.	2	3				1	2					1
9.	1	5	1	1		3	1					1
10.		2	4	2		1	1	2			1	
11.	3	2	3			2	2				1	
Total	28	36	12	7	16	15	8	3		2	4	4
Per- cent	32	41	14	8	36	34	18	7		20	40	40
12.		1	5	2		1	3				1	
13.	1	2	2	1			3				1	

TABLE XIII

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ANABAPTIST BELIEFS
SUMMARY FOR PERSONS 61 PLUS

	Members				Members				Non-members			
	Parents		Mennonites		Parents		Non-Mennonites		Parents		Non-Mennonites	
	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly				
1.	9	3	1		1	3						
2.	7	6			1	3						
3.	10	3			1	3						
4.	8	4	1		1	2	1					
5.	8	4	1			4						
6.	4	9				4						
7.	12	1			1	3						
8.		10	2		1	3	1					
9.	3	9			1	3						
10.		7	6			2	2					
11.	3	7	1		1	2	1					
Total	64	63	12		7	32	5					
Per- cent	44	43	8		16	71	11					
12.			12			1	3					
13.		4	8			4						

Summary of Questionnaire by Age Groups

The persons who participated in the questionnaire were asked to indicate their age groups. These groups were: 14-20; 21-40; 41-60; and 60 and over. The purpose behind this division was to see whether there would be a significant difference between the various age levels. It was Will Herberg's thesis that as immigrant groups continued to live in America that there was a significant difference in the ways the various generations held to the faith. Thus we have taken twenty year spans of time as rough equivalents to the various generations. We have also divided the years as we have because the two World Wars, the Korean conflict, and now the present war have created the necessity of facing a crucial belief of the Anabaptists, namely nonresistance. Those 60 years and over were involved in the stress of World War I. Those 41-60 lived between the wars but the younger ones were faced with decisions about the Second World War. Those 21-41 lived through the Korean war, and those under 20 are now faced with the Vietnam conflict. In other words, we have taken the stand on nonresistance as a crucial question and have divided the time periods accordingly.

Age group 14-20. Among this group there were no members whose parents were not members of the church. Thus another division was attempted: Children of Mennonite parents were divided between those who had already become members of the church and those who had not. There was no significant differ-

ence to this category separation. This seems to say that the ideas of the children of members are basically formed before they reach high school. Two persons who are not members and whose parents are not Mennonites are included in the study. It is interesting to note that they generally agree with the rest of the persons in the age group. The persons whose parents are Mennonites agreed or strongly agreed with the statements 76 per cent of the time. The two non-members of non-Mennonite parentage agreed 68 per cent of the time.

There was significant agreement on five of the statements. These were the statements on freedom of faith (No. 1), baptism on faith (No. 2), discipleship (No. 3), infant baptism (No. 6), and evangelism (No. 7). There was no disagreement with any of these statements.

There was significant disagreement with two statements. The first was the statement on discipline (No. 5). Here 75 per cent disagreed and one person strongly disagreed. Only one person agreed. The second statement was on suits at law (No. 10). Here again 75 per cent disagreed or disagreed strongly. However, two persons strongly agreed while one person was undecided.

Nonresistance (No. 8) had 50 per cent of the persons strongly agreeing and 17 per cent agreeing. Another 17 per cent disagreed and two persons were undecided about the statement. Both of the non-members with non-Mennonite parents did not accept the statement with one strongly disagreeing.

The church and state issue (No. 9) had only one person

disagreeing, but only half as many strongly agreed with this statement as with the statement on nonresistance (No. 8).

The statement on non-swearing of oaths (No. 11) had 75 per cent agreement.

Age group 21-40. In this group there are 8 members with Mennonite parents, and 5 members with non-Mennonite parents. There are 6 who are non-members and whose parents are not Mennonites. In this group it is significant to note that the members from non-Mennonite parentage agree or strongly agreed 85 per cent of the time while the members whose parents are Mennonites agreed or strongly agreed only 68 per cent of the time. There is quite a separation between the members and the non-members for the non-members agreed or strongly agreed only 48 per cent of the time.

The members with Mennonite parentage had 100 per cent agreement on the first three statements. The members of non-Mennonite parentage had 100 per cent agreement on these three also plus evangelism (No. 7) and non-resistance (No. 8). The statement on discipline (No. 5) had 88 per cent of the members agreeing or strongly agreeing with only one person strongly disagreeing and another not sure. Among the non-members 82 per cent disagreed. On the question of church and state (No. 9) 75 per cent of the members with Mennonite parentage agreed or strongly agreed while only 60 per cent of the members with non-Mennonite parentage agreed. Of the non-members there was 66 per

cent disagreement with the statement. It is interesting to note that of the two members of Mennonite parents who checked disagreement with the church and state sentence, one checked agreement with nonresistance while the other checked disagreed.

In areas of significant disagreement the greatest disagreement came on the statement about suits at law. Eighty-eight per cent of the members with Mennonite parents disagreed or disagreed strongly, but only 40 per cent of the members from non-Mennonite parents disagreed. The non-members disagreed or disagreed strongly 100 per cent. Nonswearing of oaths (No. 11) and separation from the world (No. 4) received the same proportion of disagreement: 62 per cent of the members with Mennonite parents and 20 per cent of the members with non-Mennonite parents. Eighty-three per cent of the non-members disagreed with the separation from the world statement (No. 4), and 50 per cent with the non-swearing of oaths (No. 11) statement. On the issue of church and state (No. 9) the non-members disagreed 66 per cent while the members disagreed only 23 per cent.

One non-member showed deep conflict with the statement. There was strong agreement with only the freedom of faith statement (No. 1), and agreement on discipleship (No. 3) and infant baptism (No. 6). Several comments were penciled in. The comment on evangelism was "too emphatic for agreement." The statement on church and state (No. 9) was deemed "too ambiguous." And the sentence about not swearing oaths (No. 11) was thought to be "questionable as to context of quote."

Age group 41-60. In this group of 13 there are 8 members of Mennonite parentage, 4 members of non-Mennonite parentage, and one non-member of non-Mennonite parentage. There is little difference between the two groups of members. They both agreed or strongly agreed over 70 per cent of the time. The non-member disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements 80 per cent of the time.

Outside of one person who disagreed with the first statement, there was 100 per cent agreement or strong agreement with the statement on freedom of faith (No. 1), baptism on confession of faith (No. 2), discipleship (No. 3) and evangelism (No. 7) in both groups of members. Infant baptism (No. 6) had one member from each group disagreeing and one member strongly disagreeing to the sentence "as stated." The statement on evangelism (No. 7) had 75 per cent of the members with Mennonite parents agreeing strongly and the rest agreeing while all of the members of non-Mennonite parents agreed strongly.

On the nonresistance statement (No. 8) 50 per cent agreed or strongly agreed, 15 per cent disagreed and 30 per cent did not check any of the areas. One who left the space unmarked wrote, "This position takes a high level of dedication to the spirit of Jesus." Another wrote, "Depends on many things." Two members of Mennonite parents marked strong agreement and two members of non-Mennonite parents marked disagreement.

In areas of significant disagreement we find that the separation from the world statement (No. 4) had 37 per cent of

the members of non-Mennonite parents disagreed. The same percentage apply to the non-swearing of oaths statement (No. 11). Twenty-five per cent of the members of Mennonite parents disagreed with the statement on discipline (No. 5) while the members of non-Mennonite parents agreed and strongly agreed with one person undecided. The church and state statement (No. 9) had 25 per cent of the persons disagreeing in both groups. The highest percentage of disagreement came over suits (No. 10). Here 75 per cent were negative with 33 per cent strongly disagreeing.

Age group 61 and over. In this group there were a total of 13 members with Mennonite parents and 4 members with non-Mennonite parents. There were none in the category of non-members.

The members with Mennonite parents had the highest percentage in the strong agreement column of any group, 44 per cent. The percentage of agreement was 43 per cent making a total of 87 per cent on the positive side. There was only 8 per cent disagreement and no strong disagreement. The members with non-Mennonite parents had only 16 per cent strong agreement, but they had 71 per cent agreement making a total of 88 per cent on the positive side. They had only 11 per cent disagreement and no strong disagreement.

With such a high degree of agreement, the most significant areas are those marked agree strongly. Among members with Mennonite parents the statement on evangelism (No. 7) had the highest rating in strong agreement, 91 per cent. Second highest was

discipleship (No. 3) which had a strong agreement rating of 80 per cent. Among members with non-Mennonite parents no statement received more strong agreement checks than any other. Statements receiving no strong agreement checks among members with Mennonite parents were nonresistance (No. 8), and the statement about suits (No. 10). Among the members with non-Mennonite parents discipline (No. 5), infant baptism (No. 6), nonresistance (No. 8) and suits (No. 10) did not receive any strong agreement checks.

Among both groups the question of suits at law (No. 10) received the most disagreement, 47 per cent. Second highest was nonresistance (No. 8) with 18 per cent disagreement.

Analysis of the Questionnaire

The members of the First Mennonite Church participating in the questionnaire show significant agreement with many of the teachings of the Anabaptist fathers. This can be seen at all age levels and among those of non-Mennonite parentage as well as those of Mennonite parentage. While they show a significantly high degree of agreement than the non-members participating in the questionnaire, we do not know the extent to which they would vary from other Christians in the community. An attempt will be made to determine the significance of the questionnaire by analyzing the responses to specific topics by age group and by the background of the persons.

We shall note first of all the percentages of agreement according to age groups and background.

TABLE XIV

PERCENTAGES OF AGREEMENT ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS AND BACKGROUND

Age Group	14-20	21-40	41-60	60-
Mennonite Parents	76%	68%	73%	87%
Non-Mennonite Parents	-	85%	70%	87%
Non-members	68%	48%	20%	-

In the above table the members with Mennonite parents vary significantly according to age group. The pattern confirms the thesis of Will Herberg that the older persons who either came from Europe or grew up in a separatist atmosphere will be the strongest in holding to the norms of the church. The younger ones have been influenced by the prevailing culture and have probably also been secularized. The young members of the church show an increase in affirmation. It is possible that Hanson's Law which says that "what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember," may be at work. They may also be reflecting the pastoral leadership since 1953 during which there has been a strong emphasis upon several aspects of the Anabaptist heritage. This same strength is seen in the members with non-Mennonite parents. In the 21-40 age group they show a much greater adherence to the statements than do the members of Mennonite parents. This could mean that those coming into the church from other denominations have considered what it means to be a Mennonite and have joined with a greater commitment. The entrance of persons without a Mennonite heritage cannot be said to be

diluting the traditional faith of the church.

The age group 41-60 were affected by World War I and the pressures for change that came with it. Because of this we could anticipate the lowering of agreement among the children of former members. Those in the 21-40 age group were affected by World War II and the Korean War and show the greatest deviation from the statements. If the trend that is manifested in these two generations would continue, then the church would have little distinctive character on the basis of nonresistance within another generation. But the younger group in the church seem to have turned the tide.

Turning to specific issues of the survey, one would expect to find strong agreement with the first three statements and with the statement on evangelism. They find general acceptance among most denominations and are therefore the most easily defended.

TABLE XV

MEMBERS ACCEPTANCE OF STATEMENTS ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS

Age Group		14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
No. 1	Freedom of faith	100%	100%	92%	94%
No. 2	Baptism on faith	100%	92%	100%	100%
No. 3	Discipleship	100%	100%	100%	100%
No. 7	Evangelism	100%	92%	100%	100%

In the above table the only statement that could have caused a problem was No. 2 since some of the members of non-

Mennonite background had been baptized as infants. The one person who disagreed with the statement was a member of Mennonite parents.

Deviation from the statements in the questionnaire appear when they spell out what discipleship means in everyday life. Does it mean, for example, separation from the world in the style of life and worship? On this issue some members showed real hesitancy.

TABLE XVI

PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT TO THE STATEMENT ON
SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD (No. 4)

	Age Group			
	14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
Mennonite parents	83%	38%	63%	92%
Non-Mennonite parents	-	80%	50%	75%
Non-members	100%	16%	-	-

The trend which we noted in Table XIV with regard to a general movement away from traditional beliefs is very pronounced in this table. The drop in percentage of agreement from the oldest group to the 21-40 group is nearly 60 per cent among the members with Mennonite parents. This appears to be a sure sign of assimilation and secularization. But again we notice a strong agreement with the statement on the part of the youth. Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that this statement was interpreted to them in terms of some of the social issues of the

day and not in terms of queer dress and rejection of modern ways of living. The percentages for the members of non-Mennonite parents follows the previously noted trend with the younger members affirming the statement more strongly than the members of Mennonite parents. The non-members in the 21-40 age group had only 17 per cent acceptance of the statement showing that there is still a difference between the lowest percentage of a member group and those who are not members.

The percentages on the nonresistance statement (No. 8) follows much the same pattern as the one above.

TABLE XVII
PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT TO THE STATEMENT ON
NONRESISTANCE (No. 8)

	Age Group			
	14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
Mennonite parents	75%	38%	62%	83%
Non-Mennonite parents	-	100%	25%	75%
Non-members	0	0	0	-

The percentages in the above table among the members with Mennonite parents is in accord with the history of the congregation in regard to the draft. In each successive war there were a greater percentage of men who served in the armed forces. The percentage still holding to nonresistance in the 21-40 age group and in the 41-60 group may be the women. No division was made on the basis of sex but since the women did not need to make the

decision in quite the same way as the men, it would be easier for them to hold to the position. The youth in the church again show a revival of interest in this position. Only two youth marked disagreement with the statement and two were undecided.

Among members of non-Mennonite parents there is a surprising degree of acceptance. While the nonresistant position is not mandatory for persons joining the church, the fact that the Mennonite Church is a historic peace church makes prospective members seriously consider the position before joining the church. The percentage disagreeing with the position points up the problem that some are not able to accept the position even though they do join the church. One member of non-Mennonite background told the pastor, "I will never be a Mennonite." When asked what she meant, since she was a member, she said that she could never accept the nonresistant stand of the church.

When it comes to the issue of church and state, or more specifically freedom to act vs. state authority, there is substantial agreement with the Anabaptist statement. It could well be that the biblical statement, "We must obey God rather than men," has fairly wide acceptance within society in general.

TABLE XVIII
PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT TO THE STATEMENT ON
CHURCH AND STATE (No. 9)

	Age Group			
	14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
Mennonite parents	91%	75%	75%	100%
Non-Mennonite parents	-	60%	75%	100%
Non-members	100%	25%	0	-

The percentage of agreement among the members of Mennonite parents may reflect the fact that Mennonites have traditionally been in opposition to the governments under which they lived. Thus they manifest a greater sense of detachment from the government. The non-members not having this background show little inclination to question the authority of the state. Also the members in the 21-40 age group seemingly do not correlate non-resistance with rejection of the authority of the state. While they agreed with the nonresistance 100 per cent they could agree with this statement only 60 per cent.

TABLE XIX
PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT TO THE STATEMENT ON
SUITS IN COURT (No. 10)

	Age Group			
	14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
Mennonite parents	17%	13%	25%	61%
Non-Mennonite parents	-	60%	25%	50%
Non-members	0	0	0	-

The percentages above reflect the position of the General Conference Mennonite Church as a whole. In 1847 when the Eastern District Conference was organized the constitution that was adopted modified the total rejection of the use of the courts as given in the quotation and made it possible to use the courts when one was being falsely accused. They stated in their constitution,

Resolved, that we will at all times, render due honor to those in authority, but we will also appeal to government 'as the minister of God,' for protection; however, only in case of necessity. In every instance, when it can be proved, that a member appealed to the law for dishonest or malicious purposes he shall be censured and corrected by the congregation.¹⁵

This type of statement would have received a higher degree of acceptance. But it is still evident that the older generation holds to a more literal interpretation of the injunction of the Sermon on the Mount.

¹⁵ Taken from the English translation of the Constitution of the Mennonite Communion. N.B. Grubb, trans. (Typewritten 1929), p. 15.

The refusal to swear an oath has about the same degree of acceptance among the members as does nonresistance.

TABLE XX
PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT TO THE STATEMENT ON
SWEARING OF OATHS (No. 11)

	Age Group			
	14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
Mennonite parents	75%	38%	62%	91%
Non-Mennonite parents	-	80%	50%	75%
Non-members	-	17%	0	-

As the younger members of the congregation have been assimilated into the life of America, the importance of such a teaching as this has diminished. The fact that it seems to be correlated to nonresistance may mean that persons who hold to one of the more distinctive teachings of the Anabaptist church in today's world, will also tend to hold to the others as well. A more closely defined instrument would be needed to determine whether this is true.

The statement that was rejected the strongest by the younger members of the church was the one on discipline (No. 5).

TABLE XXI

PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT TO THE STATEMENT ON DISCIPLINE (No. 5)

	Age Group			
	14-20	21-40	41-60	61-
Mennonite parents	8%	87%	62%	92%
Non-Mennonite parents	-	80%	75%	100%
Non-members	0	83%	100%	-

Whereas the youth of the church generally affirmed the statements as given, in this instance they all but one disagreed or strongly disagreed with the position. But what is just as surprising is that a large portion of those in all of the other age groups affirmed the need of discipline. It is difficult to hazard a guess as to the reason for their position. In Chapter I we saw that the church has never formally disciplined any member and that it has found it difficult to handle even the problem of inactive members. As the church has tolerated a greater variety in ethics among the members, a standard by which discipline could be accomplished has disappeared. It is therefore impossible to interpret the meaning of the responses on this statement.

Conclusions from the Analysis

According to Yinger (See Chapter I) there are different types of sects and some sects have become denominations while others have become established sects. Those sects that confronted the evils of society, rather than personal needs, became established sects. Leland Harder concluded from his study that the General

Conference Mennonite Church is an established sect. The questionnaire has been analyzed to determine the extent to which the First Mennonite Church still holds to Anabaptist norms.

It is obvious that at least four of the statements are no help in determining the sectarian nature of the First Mennonite Church. These are the statements about freedom of faith, baptism on faith, discipleship, and evangelism. These positions have wide acceptance among many churches and denominations. It could have been anticipated, therefore, that the church would have no problem with these statements, which was the actual situation.

It is on those questions where the congregation is divided and where there is a difference of opinion between the younger and older members of the congregation that we find norms that are still considered sectarian today. These are the statements on separation from the world (No. 4), nonresistance (No. 8) suits in court (No. 10) and the non-swearing of oaths (No. 11). The adherence to these statements by the members of the church is quite high.

TABLE XXII
CONGREGATION'S ACCEPTANCE OF SECTARIAN NORMS

Norms	Members Mennonite Parents	Members Non-Menno. Parents	All Members
Separation from the World	73%	69%	72%
Nonresistance	63%	77%	66%
Suits at Law	29%	46%	33%
Swearing of Oaths	66%	46%	61%

Assuming that the persons answering the questionnaire are a representative group of the congregation, we can conclude that the church has elements that would tend to distinguish it as an established sect. Three of the statements have over 60 per cent of the total members answering the questionnaire answering affirmatively. The degree of sectarianism within a group cannot be strictly determined by the answers to this questionnaire. The statement on separation from the world does not tell how the members apply this in life. Obviously it does not mean eschewing the use of cars, television, modern dress and styles, and modern conveniences. The statements on nonresistance and suits at law can be looked upon as definitions of the broader statement on separation from the world for these are standards that are not accepted by society at large. Here we can observe that these norms are not held with equal strength. Twice as many members hold to nonresistance as to the statement opposing any suits at law. The reason for this could be that there has been much more

teaching of nonresistance than of the other doctrine. Because it still holds to nonresistance the First Mennonite Church maintains a sectarian stance even though in many other areas it is quite indistinguishable from churches of other denominations.

A serious discrepancy is noticed when a comparison is made between the results of the survey of beliefs and the history of the church. The lack of efforts in evangelism and the small number of men who have taken the nonresistance stand during time of war contrasts strongly with the affirmations of evangelism and nonresistance. One possible explanation is that a structural disequilibrium exists between the norms of evangelism and nonresistance. It has been the general feeling of Mennonites that if a church is to be effective in evangelism it has to be more permissive in the stand on nonresistance; or if the nonresistance position is to be promoted it must of necessity give less emphasis to evangelism. On this basis we should anticipate that either evangelism or nonresistance would be strongly manifested in practice. But this is not the case. Another possibility is that secularization has taken place so that neither belief is held to be important. This again is not a suitable answer as evangelism has never been an important part of the life of the church as far as reaching the community is concerned.

The solution to the discrepancy between profession and practice appears to be two-fold. With reference to nonresistance the pressure of the community, or acculturation, seems to be the dominant reason why a greater showing in practice has not been

manifested. To be a part of the community has meant accepting community values. With reference to evangelism there may well be a structural disequilibrium between two norms. The norms that are in conflict are evangelism and close family fellowship. While the church acknowledges it should be accepting persons from the community into the life of the church, to do so would weaken the close-knit fellowship. It finds it easier to sacrifice a newer emphasis for an older established emphasis. As long as the church was growing through Mennonites who had moved into the community the sacrifice was not noticeable. But since the number of Mennonites moving into the community has been decreasing, the problem will become an increasingly crucial one.

VIII. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have sought to gain an understanding of the congregation through a charting of the congregation. In this study we have observed that there is a large proportion of older persons and of single persons in the congregation. Since 1953 there has been a decrease in the number of Mennonites transferring into the congregation so that the church has not been able to grow by this means. The children reared in the church tend to move away and are not a strong source of life for the continuance of the church. And for a number of years the number of deaths have exceeded the number of baptisms leaving the church in a weaker condition.

The strength of the congregation lies in its older members.

The length of membership among a sizeable group of the members is more than twenty years. This tends to make the church conservative in outlook and in ability to adapt to changing conditions.

The members of the congregation live close enough to the center of activities that there is no problem of their working together. They are also scattered sufficiently to have bases in a number of communities. Having lived in the community for a number of years there is limited contact with the newer developing areas of the city which limits their ability to be in contact with newcomers to the city from the natural base of the home.

The occupations of the congregation are diverse and are representative of the community which is predominately a white collar community. The same is true of the education level of the congregation. The congregation is not at a disadvantage at either of these two points.

In matters of belief the church still holds to some sectarian norms and manifests the characteristics of an established sect. These norms are held much less firmly by the members in the 20 to 60 years of age range. But there is a fairly strong percentage of affirmation among some of the youth of the church. The direction of the church is not clear at this point. If it continues in the trend manifested in the past twenty years, it could lose its sectarian attitudes to the extent that it would become a church manifesting the traits of a denomination.

On the basis of the previous studies we shall seek in the next chapter to outline proposals for a continuing mission for

the First Mennonite Church.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MISSION OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH OF UPLAND

In the previous chapters we have sought to determine what the mission of the First Mennonite Church has been and is now conceived to be by the members. A demographic study of the congregation along with a study of its sectarian beliefs was also made to determine the character of the church. These studies have been preparatory to the present chapter in which we shall make proposals for the continuing life of the church. Before this is done we shall set forth a normative statement on the nature and mission of the Church as we understand this biblically and theologically.

I. THE NATURE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH

In any understanding of the church the Bible has a central place. There are those who speak of the Bible as their authority for their theology. But it is clear from the varieties of understandings that it is not the Bible alone that is the authority. Compounded into the theology are the centuries of history of the church, and the experiences of the person doing the writing. It is more true to speak of the Bible, history, and the inspiration of the Spirit of God as the three elements that shape any understanding of the church. These are the sources from which a

theology can be developed.

Recognizing that the church today is an outgrowth of the work of Jesus, the church today needs to take seriously the understanding of the first Christians about their life and the reason and purpose behind it. The Bible is, therefore, the primary source for our thinking. But very important also, if we are not to be accused of spinning theories that have no relevance or relationship to existing churches, are the history of the church and the presence of the Spirit of God at work in the life of the church today.

The Church as Christian Community

When the New Testament speaks about the church it does not refer to a building, to a worship service, nor to an organization. It is speaking about a group of people who have been gathered together by the Spirit of Christ who is confessed as Savior and Lord. It was their conviction that as they met together that Christ was present with them. They believed the word, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). In line with the sociological analysis of this paper, the church can best be spoken of theologically as a Christian community. By the word community we refer to a group of people living in a particular area having common interests. By the word Christian we point to the centrality of Christ as the one in whom God has been clearly revealed and who, is therefore, the organizing center of the existence of the church. Thus we

would say that "there is no Christian outside of Christ; there is no church outside of Christ."¹ The church is present wherever there is a community of Christians who are seeking in a unified way to live under the direction of the Spirit of Jesus.

For most people the Church they experience most vitally is the local congregation. But this is not the limit of the Church. Larger communities are also expressions of the Church. Then the New Testament speaks of the total Church in the world. This is largely a mystical concept as it has no form that can be experienced. To say that it is a "mystical" concept does not mean that there is no reality to which such a concept points. It is a necessary dimension without which the church in its local expression becomes idolized. The concept of the local church and of the universal Church need to be held in tension so that neither is idolized. The Church is not an end in itself. It is the means by which man may become human according to the will of God.

The Church as a Christian community lives in the midst of a larger community, the world. H. Richard Niebuhr has adequately described the relationship between the Christian community and the world community in the following paragraph.

The world is sometimes enemy, sometimes partner of Church, often antagonist, always one to be befriended; now it is the co-knower, now the one that does not know what Church knows, now the knower of what Church does not know. The world is.

¹Harold S. Bender, These Are My People (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1962), p. 29.

the community of those before God who feel rejected by God and reject him; again it is the community of those who do not know God and seem not to be known by him; or, it is the community of those who knowing God do not worship him. In all cases it is the community to which the Church addresses itself with its gospel, to which it gives an account of what it has seen and heard in divine revelation, which it invites to come and see and hear. The world is the community to which Christ comes and to which he sends his disciples. On the other hand, the world is the community of those who are occupied with temporal things. When, in its sense of rejection, it is preoccupied with these temporal matters it is the world of idolatry and becomes foe of the Church. When it is occupied with them as gifts of God--whether or not the consciousness of grace becomes explicit--it is the partner of the Church, doing what the Church, concerned with the non-temporal, cannot do; knowing what Church as such cannot know. Thus and in other ways the relations of Church and world are infinitely variable; but they are always dynamic and important.²

The Faith and Purpose of the Christian Community

In speaking of the church as a Christian community we point to the fact that the early church knew Jesus Christ as its Savior and Lord. In Jesus they were made aware of the purposes of God for man and received the grace that made it possible for them to become open to the movement of the Spirit of God in their lives. Prior to this experience of life in Christ their lives were lived, for the most part, in alienation from both God and their fellow men. In Jesus they experienced the presence of God fully at work. "The divine Spirit," says Tillich, "was present in Jesus as the Christ without distortion."³ Through this

²H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 26.

³Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), III, 144.

experience of God in Christ their lives were transformed and re-directed. New dimensions of life were opened to them. Jesus Christ was therefore the keystone in the arch of spiritual existence.

J. C. Hoekendijk has characterized this new life as the establishment of shalom. Shalom is much more than personal salvation. "It is at once peace, integrity, community, harmony, and justice."⁴ It is fulfillment of the highest purposes of God. This shalom was promised by Jesus to his disciples when he said, "Shalom I leave with you, my shalom I give to you" (John 14:27). And the preaching of the apostles was summarized as "preaching the good news of shalom by Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:36). The Christian community is the place where shalom is experienced and expressed in greatest intensity. It then becomes the purpose of the Christian community to be the avenue by which shalom is expressed in the world.

This life lived in relation to God is of such a character that Tillich calls it the "New Being." Emil Brunner refers to those who have experienced the grace of God in Christ as the "New Humanity." Brunner's designation has the advantage of emphasizing the fact that the Christian life is lived in Christian community. It must be recognized that the Christian life cannot be lived in isolation. The life of faith as it was

⁴J. C. Hoekendijk, The Church Inside Out (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 21.

manifested in the first Christian community germinated in the seedbed of the community that was formed by the call of Abraham the patriarch. It blossomed forth through the experience of Pentecost, and it continues to reproduce itself within the context of a living fellowship. As Brunner says, "There is a fellowship of Christians because God . . . did not create men as isolated individuals intelligible in themselves and living in their own strength, but as beings to whom He will give His own life, binding them to one another by this gift."⁵ The church is not made up of disconnected individuals. Its very essence is that of community.

It may appear preposterous and a grotesque piece of conceit for the Christian community to speak of itself as the "New Humanity." In its weak, fragmented and partial state, how can it have the audacity to make such a claim? This it does on two counts. The first is that it knows itself to be the chosen people of God. Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians that God "destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:4). The second is, according to the terminology of Tillich, that while this existence is fragmentary it is still unambiguous. While the response of the church may be fragmentary, the presence of the Spirit is not. "The fragmentary character of a group's acceptance of the Spirit makes this group, in the

⁵Emil Brunner, Dogmatics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), III, 23.

moment of acceptance, a holy community."⁶

The Church as Christian community is not an end in itself. It is not its own object. The object of the Church is God from whom it has received its existence and to whom it is responsible. To be the Church it must receive its purpose from God who was revealed in Christ and this is to redeem man from his dehumanized state into full humanity. It has been proposed that the Church's goal is basically "the increase among men of the love of God and neighbor."⁷ This two dimensional goal adequately encompasses all proximate goals that churches frequently establish and it stands as the criterion by which all activities of the Christian community can be judged. The activities of the church as Christian community are, therefore, cruciform. In its vertical relationships the whole community, including the community beyond the church, is brought into an awareness of man's dependance upon God and his love and purposes. In its horizontal relationships the Christian community realizes that its response to the neighbor must have the quality of divine love, agape, which is a sharing, giving, self-communicating love.

Characteristics of the Christian Community

In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2, we have Luke's account of the blossoming forth of the Christian

⁶Tillich, Op. Cit., p. 140.

⁷H. Richard Niebuhr, Op. Cit., p. 31.

community on the day of Pentecost. In this account we find six essential characteristics of the church. Here we follow Tillich's suggestions.⁸ The first characteristic that was manifested was ecstasy. The one hundred and twenty persons who had been together in the upper room came forth from that experience with an enthusiasm and vitality that was noticeable to all who observed them. The source of this ecstasy was the experience of the Holy Spirit. It must be said that all the characteristics of the Christian community are derivative from the presence of the Spirit. Because of this we can call the church the community of the Holy Spirit. As such it manifests ecstasy as one of its characteristics.

The second characteristic that was manifested in the first Christian community was their faith that Jesus Christ was their Savior and Lord by the power of the Divine Spirit. The beginnings of this faith were almost wiped out by the experience of the crucifixion. But the experience of the presence of Christ after the resurrection transformed those gathered from a disorganized, frightened group of persons into a unified, courageous community of faith. They believed that God had been present and active in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus for their salvation. Without faith in God's action in Christ there is no Christian community.

The third characteristic in the account of Pentecost was

⁸ Tillich, Op. Cit., p. 151.

the love which bound the group into a body that was willing to share their goods with all who became members of the community. This willingness to share with total strangers who became a part of the community shows that there is no Christian community without a self-giving love. The church is a community of love. The result of the presence of love was an intensive fellowship. The term used for this relationship in the New Testament is koinonia. Koinonia, which is translated as fellowship, communion, or participation, always carries the meaning of sharing and of participating in a common life. Bender makes the point that in the New Testament "the church is never directly called a fellowship; it has fellowship."⁹ It should also be said that fellowship does not produce love, but that the presence of love produces fellowship.

Unity was the fourth characteristic noticeable in the early church. Within this group were persons of various countries, cultures, and traditions. They all shared the common experience. The disruption of mankind, as symbolized by the account of the tower of Babel, is here transformed and men can now experience the purposes of God in a vital unifying manner. From this it can be said that there is no Christian community where there is no reuniting of persons who have been estranged from each other.

The fifth characteristic was its missionary fervor.

⁹Bender, Op. Cit., p. 42.

Having been grasped by the power of the Spirit they could not keep silent. There was a desire to share their new life and as a result there were persons who were brought into the community in great numbers. Their concern was not to build an organization, but to help other persons experience the new life within the community of faith and love. The church is therefore a witnessing community with the members sharing with each other and with the non-Christian community what it means to be human according to the purposes of God.

The sixth characteristic manifested was universality. The Christian community brought into their fellowship persons of many nations, of varying racial backgrounds, and of languages. The Spirit of God in the lives of the members was seeking to find expression in all men. There could be no provincial exclusiveness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To be a Christian community there needs to be an openness to all individuals and groups and a deep-seated desire to have them participate in the life of the community. To manifest the love of God the Christian community needs to be as wide as the world.

Limitations of the Christian Community

The churches in the present situation do not always manifest the characteristic of the church at its birth. Here we would acknowledge with Tillich the concept of the latent and manifest church. The latent church is composed of all persons who respond to the presence of the Spirit of God yet do not

acknowledge the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The Gospel according to John speaks of "the true light that enlightens every man" (John 1:9), and Luke records that Paul was informed by the Lord in a vision to continue preaching in Corinth because He had "many people" in the city (Acts 18:10). The Christian community should readily confess that God is not bound by the organized structure of the church and that the Spirit can be present in groups outside the church in an impressive way. Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan should never let the church forget this.

The manifest church is seen within the Christian community among those who show the fruits of faith in Christ. The organized church as we know it today is not coterminous with the manifest church. Not all who are on the membership rolls of the church are expressions of the life of the new humanity, even in fragmentary form. The organized church is both manifest and latent church. And we must confess that frequently the Christian community is a miserable representation of the reality it is supposed to be.

Yet we would affirm that it is precisely the church that is weak that is still the church of Christ for it bears witness to the reality that was revealed in Christ. Even though the number of the new humanity may be few and their strength limited, it is because of the presence of the Spirit and the witness of the Word that the potentiality is good for the church to become existentially what it is essentially. The church must not be content to confess its weakness, but should seek even more

earnestly to manifest the characteristics of the true church as these were seen at its inception.

Images of the Church

The New Testament abounds in images that are used to describe the Christian community. Minear has discovered over eighty.¹⁰ One that the Apostle Paul used extensively is that of the body of Christ. This figure, along with the others, is not to be taken literally or ontologically. The Apostle used the concept of the body to illustrate the unity of the church in Christ and the centrality of Christ to the life of the church. The church is wholly dependent upon Christ for without him there would be no church. Along with the unity of the church goes the diversity of functions of the members. The members are not to function in the same way but they each add to the church the gifts that they have to offer.

Coordinate with the concept of the body is the headship of Christ over the church. This metaphor emphasizes the continuing Lordship of Christ. The church is to be guided by Christ through his spirit. His program and goals are to be carried out by the church. Some of the arguments of Paul seem strange to us today because he used Hebrew psychology in explaining his analogies.¹¹

¹⁰Paul S. Minear, Images of the Church in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960).

¹¹F. J. Taylor, "Body," in Alan Richardson, ed., A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: Macmillan, 1953), p. 35.

Nevertheless it has been a powerful concept for understanding the nature and purpose of the church.

The Christian Community and Mission

The Christian community was born in mission and it developed in mission. In time members of the community saw itself as having a mission instead of being in mission. When this occurred the church became an end in itself. It was idolized and was credited with having ontological existence. The result has been that Christians have tended to equate loyalty to Christ with loyalty to the institutional churches. This has been the weakness and downfall of many churches in the present situation. Instead of seeing the church as existing for the world, the world has been seen as existing for the church.

During the Middle Ages all of society was baptized into the church and the church and the world were then seen as coterminous. The Anabaptists have this to their credit that they saw that the church could never be co-extensive with society. They, therefore, sought to call men into a faithful community. Due to persecution this high vision was driven into the ground with the result that what had started out to be an authentic expression of the church was transformed into an established sect that became the institutional church for a small segment of society. For an authentic view of the church we need to go back to the beginning of the existence of the church and see that the church arises and is continuously created anew wherever there are

persons who are gathered into the faithful community by the spirit of Christ. We speak of it as the faithful community rather than the community of the faithful for the church is truly the church when in its weakness it strives to be faithful to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and to the purposes of God in the present situation as a community. While the community seeks to be faithful it must confess its unfaithfulness in many situations.

The reality of the incarnation of God in Christ informs the church that its mission is in the world. The Lord is not imprisoned in the church. He is already present in the world and the Christians are called to be God's agents of reconciliation. John Deschner has stated it well when he wrote:

The Christian mission is not an expedition to claim conquests for an absent sovereign. The Christian mission is an act of fellowship with the Lord who is already there, identified with those who as yet do not know him. 'The missionary should not think of himself as someone who takes Christ to another people,' said a Nigerian lawyer, 'but as someone Christ takes to another people.'¹²

In placing the emphasis where it ought to be, on the mission in the world, it is possible to become very anti-institutional. The institution may need to be minimized where it has been emphasized too much. But it must be recognized that the institutions of the church have an important function for the church. The church is an organism that needs organization to

¹² John W. Deschner, "Jesus Christ and the Christian Mission," in The Christian Mission Today (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 23.

accomplish its task. It needs to be organized for mission and not solely for self-perpetuation.

The mission of the church is a single mission. That mission is to make and keep men truly human. To be human is to experience the humanity that God intended at creation and this is found in a loving relationship to God and the neighbor. The depth of this relationship is found in an experience of shalom. The single mission of the church has two dimensions. One dimension is related to the members within the community. As a Christian community the church engages in worship, study and dialogue. All of these are means by which men should seek to discern the will of God for the community and for the world. The gathering of the community is for the purpose of engaging in theological reflection by which it should seek to understand the present in the light of the action of God in the events of the past.

The second dimension of the mission of the community is to the world. Here the mission is understood under the figures of apostolate and servanthood. The members of the church are sent out into the world to serve as agents of reconciliation. Reconciliation, according to Arnold Come, is "the restoration and fulfillment of God's original and persistent purpose for his creation,"¹³ and this is to live in a loving relationship to God and the neighbor. Reconciliation needs to occur wherever

¹³Arnold Come, Agents of Reconciliation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 29.

there is alienation and this may exist between man and God, man and man, and even within man himself. The church as the reconciled community fulfills its mission when it is the agency of reconciliation in the world; when it has become the servant of God active in the world.

II. THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH IN MISSION

Having considered the doctrine of the church and its mission we now turn to the First Mennonite Church and its mission. What does it mean for a small congregation with a sectarian heritage to be engaged in mission? It must first be observed that a church must be interested in more than survival if it is to be the church. In fact a struggle for survival may be a denial of mission. Hoekendijk warns that frequently the sense of urgency that congregations manifest for evangelism "is often nothing but a nervous feeling of insecurity, with the established church endangered; a flurried activity to save the remnants of a time now irrevocably past."¹⁴ If outreach is undertaken under such motivation it is not likely to help a church survive for long. Survival as such is not to be looked upon as a necessity. If a church has served its function as vitally as it can, it is no great tragedy to close up the doors. It would be a greater tragedy for a church to continue to pretend that it is doing a vital task when it has no more than

¹⁴Hoekendijk, Op. Cit., p. 15.

survival value.

This is not to say that the First Mennonite Church should consider closing its doors even though entertaining such a thought might be helpful to a small congregation to determine its reason for existence. But we have noted that the congregation has been experiencing a decline in membership and that unless the trend is reversed the congregation may be in serious trouble within a decade. However, if the congregation is able to discover its mission within the community the trend could be reversed.

In our study of the First Mennonite Church we have seen that the religious life of the members has been deeply integrated with all of the other aspects of life. The heritage of the Anabaptists, the German culture, and the family relationships were all intricately tied in with the church life. This has had both strengthening and weakening aspects. It was strengthening because their faith enriched other parts of their life. It was weakening in that the church was too frequently seen as existing primarily for an ethnic group and its needs and not as a force that was drawing the group into the life of the community. In our consideration of the mission of the First Mennonite Church the past history of the church, its character as a family of families, and its Anabaptist heritage will be seen as the context out of which the life of the congregation must flow. The church cannot and should not deny its heritage. Rather its contribution to the community and the other churches in the area

will be seen at its best when it offers the insights that have been derived from its history and heritage as well as from the present situation. We shall now explore the two dimensions of mission as they apply to the First Mennonite Church.

The Church Dimension of Mission

In the preceeding paragraphs on the nature and mission of the church we have indicated that the unifying purpose of all churches is to increase among men the love of God and the neighbor. This purpose is one that must continually be fulfilled within the Christian community as in the world. Within the church this is accomplished through worship, study, dialogue and fellowship. In all of these activities it must be realized that the church exists for men. The church does not exist for God, as though God needed to be served through worship and other activities. The need is entirely man's. Men need to worship, to grow through study and discussion, and to have fellowship with fellow Christians. It is with this assumption that we look at the functions of the church that contribute to its growth and development.

Worship. The First Mennonite Church has had a strong emphasis upon worship from the beginning of the congregation. It has sought to have a meaningful worship service and it desires to have the minister apply Biblical insights to life. Although there is generally more open response to a devotional sermon than to one that deals with current issues. A weakness of the

congregation is seen in the fact that a sizeable number of persons are only marginally associated with the church, and this includes the worship services. "The health or sickness of a church," according to Georgia Harkness, "depends to a very large degree on the regularity and fidelity of its members in attendance at the Sunday service of worship."¹⁵ Part of the weakness of the church may stem from a feeling of uninvolvedness in the worship service. The congregation tends to be a group of spectators, an audience who listens to the program but is not deeply involved.

In keeping with the basic concept that the church is a community of faith in which the various members have a contribution to make to the whole, the worship program should manifest a greater flexibility with more participation on the part of the members. The members themselves have desired this to some extent but adequate means of implementation have not been developed. The Ministry of Fellowship, which is responsible for the worship of the church, should take this responsibility more seriously.

Particular suggestions for increased participation by the congregation in the worship service are: Members of the congregation can lead in the reading of Scripture and in the morning prayer, in giving the children's message, and, on occasion, preaching the sermon. Greater involvement in the sermon should also be sought. The choice of topics for sermons should reflect

¹⁵Georgia Harkness, The Church and its Laity (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 94.

the concerns and needs of the congregation more directly. This can be done by providing the congregation with a list of questions describing a variety of life issues and having them indicate the more pertinent ones. Members of the congregation could be brought into greater participation in the sermon by having one or two groups meet with the pastor to discuss the Scripture text that is to be used the following Sunday. Also, the pastor could invite two or more couples to meet with him for Sunday dinner to discuss the implications of the sermon of the morning. Another means of making the worship more vital would be to provide a way for the members of the congregation to share their concerns. Since the worship service is quite formal this might be done by having a member present some personal or social issue to the congregation just prior to the morning prayer. The concern could then become a congregational matter as the congregation united in prayer.

Study. The First Mennonite Church has always had a strong emphasis upon the study of the Bible in the program of the church. There are Sunday School classes for all age groups and at the present time there are four classes for adults. It must be admitted that the classes have not been as strong as they could be for only limited study of the lessons is done outside of class time. One of the classes has always been strictly lecture. Also the study has too often been seen as an end in itself rather than a means to fulfill their mission as servants. In an attempt to broaden the scope of study and the meaningfulness of the study

three of the adult classes were mixed for one quarter in a study program of human problems meeting in two groups. This met with fair success but the breaking down of the original groups seemed to cause a few to lose interest. In the light of that experience it would be better for the individual classes to choose a book or topic for a quarter's study on some current question of church renewal or community need. To gain some cross fertilization of ideas two classes may join together for a quarter for study on a particular topic. Bible study should continue to have a central place within the study program of the church but at least one quarter a year should be given to the study of current issues within the context of biblical faith.

The weakest part of the study program with the adults has been the lack of interest in a study program other than during the Sunday School hour. Younger married members have not shown an interest in such a study. It may be that the Sunday School hour will need to be looked upon as the most fruitful time and promoted as aggressively as possible. The church has good resources for individual study in its library which has been growing in the past few years. It has material for all ages on a variety of topics of interest to the church. This will need to continue to develop and the church is giving it good support at the present time.

The role of the minister in the study program of the church should be that of theological specialist, and this should be his primary role. He is to be an aid to the members as they seek to

reflect theologically on the life in the world. The church has used the minister in this capacity to a limited degree. The sermon is frequently the setting for a theological interpretation of life, but the congregation does not enter into discussion over the issues presented. Less of the pastor's time should be spent in administrative activities and sermon preparation and more in preparation for classes in which vital and current problems will be considered by the members. The initiative for such classes should arise from the members more than from the minister. The Ministry of Education should seek to guide the church in its use of the minister so that his time will be used to the best advantage.

Fellowship. We have seen how the First Mennonite Church has historically been a homogeneous group of persons with such common factors as ethnic background, culture, traditions, and family relationships. This has given the church a family consciousness, but it has also been, thereby, restrictive in large measure to those who shared the same heritage. The first century church showed great diversity in its membership and universality was one of its vital characteristics. George Webber suggests that a church that is largely made up of persons of a common background and tradition are denied the possibility of the experience of koinonia which God offers his people.¹⁶ At the

¹⁶George W. Webber, The Congregation in Mission, Op. Cit., p. 124.

present time there is a fair percentage of persons of non-Mennonite backgrounds within the congregation but all of the members are Caucasians. To this extent the church is limited.

The congregation has a variety of groups that provide for social activities. These activities are a part of life but are not necessarily indicative that Christian fellowship is present. Webber again suggests that for genuine fellowship to be present there must be an honest meeting between persons in which men and women will begin to relate to each other at the level of their true humanity in Christ. In such a meeting the masks of self-deception and distrust must be abandoned. There are occasions within the life of First Mennonite when this has occurred. It has not occurred as part of a planned end. Indeed, true fellowship probably never can result as an end in itself. But such meaningful sharing and interaction does not occur as frequently as it should. The history of the church seems to work against it. It has been easier to be nice than to face each other honestly and openly. There needs to be more occasions when various members of the church speak out of their inner life and manifest a readiness to bear one another's burdens.

The image of the church as the family of God has been strong in First Mennonite. Too often it has become little more than a church of families for those who are not related by blood find it hard to enter the tight circles formed by other than Christian unities. There are members even within this small church who are total strangers to each other. The church is

manifesting some concern about this weakness. One proposal to overcome this barrier is that the members invite members they do not know into their homes for a meal and a sharing of interests. The Ministry of Fellowship will need to keep the goal of a total family in mind as they seek to promote the life of unity and love. The church can become a community of love in which the members bear one another's burdens because they share in each others lives to a greater extent. The church can thus become a therapeutic community in that members will find solutions to their personal problems as they are free to share out of their lives. The pastor should not be the sole counselor. Members can serve one another as they sensitively listen to one another. The difficult problems of life need to be treated by professional counselors and this should not be the main role of the pastor.

In the study of the congregation it was noted that there are a sizeable number of members who are inactive who still live within the area of the church. The church has a continuing interest in these persons but has not been able to do much about bringing them back into the life of the church. These persons have separated themselves from the church for a variety of reasons: some of it is due to personal problems, others have a problem in getting along with members within the church, and some have never caught a vision of what the church should and can mean in their lives. In a sense these members are the special responsibility of the church for they all made a commitment within the brotherhood and are thereby members of the church

family. Their weakness may have derived from the weakness of the church as a whole. The presently active members of the church will need to be in conversation with these persons on a vital level seeking to understand their concerns and problems and helping them in a redemptive manner to find their place within the fellowship. It is very easy to ignore them and write them off the books. Even those who express a concern about such members rarely manifest much actual interest in them as persons. The Ministry of Fellowship will need to be sensitive in seeking the best way of reaching these persons. If they solicit the advice of those who are still in close relationship to these inactive members, they might discover ways of making an effective approach. But it will need to be recognized without sentimentality that some persons will elect not to be actively involved in the life of the church and their choice will need to be respected.

Dialogue. The vision of the church as a body that is able to discern the movement of God in the world and to come to a common decision on the important issues confronting the world is a growing one within Mennonite churches. In a paper entitled, "The Church as a Discerning Community," J. Lawrence Burkholder of Harvard Divinity School proposes that congregations should meet regularly to discuss and decide issues of concern to the church and community. He suggests this ought to be done as often as monthly. The discerning community is defined as "that community

which raises fundamental questions and has a method within itself whereby it can come to conclusions and then act upon them."¹⁷

The First Mennonite Church has not had much experience in being a discerning community. Its life has been directed by an authoritarian image stemming from its Germanic heritage. The Church council has tended to make all the major decisions, and these have largely been limited to the immediate workings of the church. Another inhibiting factor for dialogue is the number of older persons with limited amount of schooling and a hesitancy to speak in a group. Then, too, the younger families have not been inclined to attend evening meetings which would involve a baby sitter. Discussion of vital issues have been tried on several occasions with mixed results. From these trials it has been learned that when persons who are not members of the congregation participate in the discussions there tends to be a lack of a solid base for decision. If there is a proposal for action in the call of the meeting, the discussion should be limited almost entirely to the members. Also the members should do the ground work in study preparation for the discussion so that the congregation itself will be in a stronger position to make a group decision. The Ministries of the church, which cover the areas of Fellowship, Business, Education and Outreach, should seek to formulate questions that the congregation should consider.

¹⁷J. Lawrence Burkholder, "The Church as a Discerning Community" (Newton, Kansas: General Conference Central Offices, 1965). Mimeographed.

There should be a responsible body that would determine which questions are appropriate for consideration by the church for the questions considered should not be trivial, nor should they be items that have no direct bearing on the life of the church. The executive committee of the Council would be the appropriate group to function in this capacity. Such discussions might be held quarterly until the congregation begins to get a feel for such issues and learns how to handle problems effectively.

The World Dimension of Mission

The second dimension of the mission of the church is to the world. "The mission of the whole church," according to Donald G. Miller, "is to establish in the whole earth the reign of Jesus Christ."¹⁸ The Anabaptists acknowledged that Jesus Christ is Lord of the church and the world, even though he is not always so acknowledged by the world. If the First Mennonite Church would see its mission as being to the world, it would be in line with its heritage and the best insights of men today. Too long the Mennonites have been known as "die stille im lande," the "quiet ones." A better suggestion made recently is that the Mennonites should become known as "the alert ones." It needs to be alert and to be organized so that it can move to meet the needs to which it has become aware. Colin Williams proposes that

¹⁸ Donald G. Miller, The Nature and Mission of the Church (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1958), p. 72.

. . . if the Church is to be the servant of God's mission, it must like Christ be sensitive to the points of disjunction in the world, and be so structured that it focuses the obedience of the Christian community at these points of need, bringing the healing resources of Christ to bear in such a way that his forgiveness and love are thrown across the chasms of separation.¹⁹

The image the First Mennonite Church has projected over the years has largely been that of an ethnic group meeting for worship and learning from their religious observances to live a quiet moral life. Witness to the world was conceived as an exemplary life, which was removed for the most part from the structures of society. There have been individuals who had a concern for the community and who sought avenues by which to manifest their interests. The church has generally not seen itself in action through these persons, and at times the action had to be taken in opposition to the church.

If the First Mennonite Church is to see itself as existing for the world it will need to uphold the images of apostolate and servanthood more clearly. A beginning has already been made in this direction. The church has established a Ministry of Outreach which has been given the obligation of guiding the congregation along these lines. The Constitution of the church was revised on January 25, 1966, and this Ministry was included in the Constitution along with Ministries of Fellowship, Business and Education. This is the first official provision for outreach

¹⁹Colin W. Williams, Where in the World? (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1963), p. 31.

in all of the constitution revisions up to the present. The work of the Ministry of Outreach as it is now described is as follows:

This ministry includes concern for evangelism and assimilation of new members, participation in programs of mental health, marriage and family life, prison work, "disaster" service and relief locally and abroad; participation in the General Conference "voluntary service" programs; discussion and action on social and political conflicts on the local, state, national, and international level.

With such a group beginning to take form within the church there is a greater possibility of letting the world write the agenda for the church than there has ever been. The church is now set organizationally to be "drawn into the various structures of the world, revealing in the shape of their corporate life the redeeming power and purpose of Christ."²⁰ It needs to be admitted that the church will be quite limited in what it is able to do since it is a small congregation and it is largely existing in the residential areas of Upland and surrounding towns. Colin Williams believes that there is "ample evidence that the local residence congregation is not the suitable form for moving out to many of the needs of our modern world."²¹ With the acknowledgment of this limitation the following suggestions are made that the congregation might consider as it seeks to exist in mission.

Evangelism. A distinctive emphasis of the Anabaptists was their call to a voluntary commitment of life to Christ. The church was composed of those who had accepted the Lordship of Christ. The church today has a faith to proclaim and an invita-

²⁰Ibid., p. 69.

²¹Ibid.

tion to extend to those who are uncommitted or who are unaware of the gospel. If the church is to continue to be the company of the committed, a verbal witness and a summons must be given. It needs to be recognized that a Christian's life is not an adequate witness in itself. All such representations are imperfect and unworthy. Ways and means of giving a verbal witness need to be found and this on an unrestricted basis so that the universality of the church will continue to be prominent in the response to the proclamation.

The First Mennonite Church has tended to be a religious kinship group, rather than a specifically religious group. This no longer appears to be a viable way of existing. With the greater mobility of persons and the lack of Mennonites moving into the area, the church could be doomed to extinction unless it becomes a specifically religious group. The means by which this can be accomplished is by some mode of evangelism. The church has rejected the methods of mass evangelism and the technique of going door to door. Both of these methods appear to be of dubious value in the present situation. When the Reverend Lester Hostetler was the pastor of the church he proposed that the members bring their friends and acquaintances to the worship services and other activities of the church. This still seems to be the method best suited to the situation. The emphasis upon the family in the congregation provides a natural setting for bringing other families into the church. In the sermons the people should then receive an invitation to Christian disciple-

ship and an opportunity of affiliating with the church.

The church has placed a great emphasis upon living a loving, dedicated and ever-consistent Christian life. The influence of such lives is important, but such influences usually fall short of evangelism. There are occasions when it is fitting for the members to speak specifically about the Christian faith, to "gossip the gospel" as it has been graphically put.²² While it is recognized that there are Christians who have made themselves obnoxious by their overly aggressive presentations of their faith, yet the members of the First Mennonite Church have erred on the side of reticence, seemingly assuming that persons would not be interested in hearing of their faith-commitments. Such reticence is not in keeping with a concern for the world.

In its evangelistic outreach the church will need to beware lest it seek to gain members for the good of the church. It is hoped that the motive for evangelism will be the loving concern for the neighbor and not a fear for the extinction of the church. If evangelism becomes prostituted to the extent of being little more than gaining members for the church, then the life of the church is also in jeopardy. The church must not become an end in itself but it should be a means of helping persons to enter the authentic life revealed in Christ.

²²Georgia Harkness, The Church and its Laity (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 105 credits the phrase to Hans-Ruedi Weber, "The Ecumenical Movement, the Laity, and the Third Assembly," The Ecumenical Review, XIII, No. 2 (January, 1961), p. 212.

Part of the task of evangelism is to carry the Christian gospel to the ends of the earth. This the First Mennonite Church has done through generous contributions of money all through its history. In a way this may have been as escape from fulfilling the task at home. However, the church should continue its support of work abroad while it seeks to be more faithful in witnessing at home. There have been no members who have dedicated their lives to service abroad. Three members have served abroad for short periods of time in service projects. The ministry to the whole world needs to be held up before the youth of the church in its multi-faceted varieties.

There are a few members of the church who have entered the professional ministry of the church, but none in the past dozen years. Church vocations for both men and women will need to be kept within the vision of the church so that those who have the ability and the call of the Spirit will be supported in their decisions for this type of ministry. There is need for persons to become proclaimers of the gospel in traditional forms as well as in the newer styles of life. The institutional church cannot be written off as obsolete. Unless churches are willing to abandon present structures, they have an obligation to train their youth to function within as well as outside them.

Service. The church needs to take as its model for life in the world the life pattern of Jesus. He came to serve, not to be served. Hoekendijk informs us, "Not only does the church

legitimize herself through her serving character, but she will want to be identified as a servant community as well."²³ The faith of the church must be expressed in action, in diakonia. The church must participate in the constant effort to make men fully human through improvisations of his social and cultural life. This emphasis needs to increase within the First Mennonite Church. The members of the church have generally seen their mission in the world to be to act with moral integrity and with eagerness to serve the needs of men in whatever vocation they found themselves. This outlook is undoubtedly pious, but it also presumes that it is somehow distinctively Christian, which is questionable. Other persons besides Christians also try to act with integrity in their work. It must be said that church attendance and acts of piety are not the extent of the requirements of God upon a Christian. Fulfilling the requirements of the job is not the paramount task of a Christian either. The demands of the gospel goes beyond this and asks for the manifestation and promotion of the love of God for the neighbor in accordance with the revelation in Christ. In line with this Georgia Harkness avers that,

the proper criterion for adequacy in Christian vocation is to be found, not in ideals of service, but in performing adequately the duties and demands of one's profession, in which there may be deep-seated moral ambiguities, and trusting to the accepting love of God made known in Christ.²⁴

²³Hoekendijk, Op. Cit., p. 83.

²⁴Georgia Harkness, Op. Cit., p. 137.

To this we would add that Christian service is also to be expressed outside of one's profession through the use of free time in ways that contribute to the humanization of life.

Turning now to specific suggestions for the fulfillment of mission it has been noted that there are members of the First Mennonite Church who are involved in the life of the community and who are seeking to fulfill a role as servants to the world. The church should see these persons as a part of the church serving the world. A first step in this direction would be for the church to take note of what these members are doing by having them make a report to the congregation about their activities, soliciting the congregation's prayerful support. These reports might be given within the individual Sunday School classes where there is a base for conversation and exploration. Such reports could also be shared with the congregation on a Sunday evening, such as the occasions when the church has a Family Night. The sharing of such activities can become a means by which other members might gain interest and desire to become involved in the same or similar work. If there is enough interest, there might be the possibility of some financial support of the work by the congregation.

In general it should be said that the congregation should not give financial support to projects within the community unless they are also willing to invest some time and energy along with it. To encourage the congregation to take a more active part in the affairs of the community, the goal of having

every member participating in at least one community organization could be adopted and promoted by the congregation. Once active in the community there will be more than enough places where some financial assistance could be given.

The church building is a prime resource which the church should consider offering to the community for use. At the present time the only use being made of church property by the community is the basketball goals which the boys of the neighborhood use for practice. The building itself is not used at all. If the church is to be a house of prayer for all peoples, it should be available for any activity that ministers to the deeper needs of men. The library of the church is a growing resource that could be made available to persons in the community. In keeping with the philosophy of "letting the world write the agenda" no specific proposals can be made without speaking to persons in the community and ascertaining their needs.

One of the strengths of the congregation is the number of older persons. Here is a resource that needs to be tapped for they have more free time available than do the younger persons. There are also older persons in the community who are not connected with any church who need to have friends and assistance with small tasks. The older members of the congregation should consider organizing for service as well as for fellowship.

Another group of persons to whom the church needs to be alert are those of Mexican background. Thus far the church has

not found any way of bridging the racial-cultural chasm that exists. If the church is to be God's servant to these persons it will need to reach out with an open heart and hand asking how it can be of help in meeting their distinctive needs. It can be anticipated that the area around the church, which is in the older section of town, will contain an increasing number of transients, minority groups, and persons who are in the lower economic level. The church should not ignore or avoid these persons but should be open to hearing God's call to them from these neighbors. It could well be that hearing this call will be the most difficult of all. Webber suggests that to be true to Christ the church must be willing to accept the way of the cross.

For the missionary congregation the way of the cross also means quite simply the willingness to give up old patterns, including church-sponsored institutions, comfortable forms, beloved activities, for the sake of its function. Congregations must be willing to give up their radical individualism and institutional preoccupation. Only congregations oriented to mission and not to membership and institutional success will pay the price of cooperation that does not necessarily build up the numbers of the local church, but does witness in a community to the gospel. Churches, more rigorously than individuals, hate to give up their own life for the sake of the world.²⁵

The lines quoted apply to all areas of mission but particularly to the church in a changing community.

A final suggestion for the church's mission to the world is that the church needs to see the necessity of cooperating

²⁵George Webber, The Congregation in Mission, Op. Cit., p. 181.

with other churches in the community if the Christian mission to the world is to be accomplished. The First Mennonite Church has cooperated with other churches since 1928 on programs that ministered to the church members, or that helped to strengthen the institutional programs of the church. For a time it co-operated in a week-day released time school that ministered to children in the community which was a program that went beyond its own interests. At the present time the church is not involved in any program that serves the needs of the community. An interdenominational organization has recently been formed that is seeking to meet the untouched needs of the communities of Upland and Ontario. There is interest in this organization within the congregation and the Ministry of Outreach will begin relating to it in the near future. As it serves together with other churches the unity of the church will be manifested in a vital and fresh way.

Peace Witness. A distinctive witness that the Mennonites can make in the present day is its peace witness stemming from the doctrine of nonresistance. While the denominations have become quite aggressive in speaking to the issues arising out of the current conflict in Vietnam, there are few congregations known for their witness as a group. While the Mennonites are finding that they have less unanimity in their witness, it continues to be a vital part of their life. The First Mennonite Church has manifested a decline in strength with which non-

resistance is held. Whether there is enough strength left on which to make a positive witness to the community is problematical. Such a witness needs to arise out of some strength for there will be pressure from the community opposing such a witness. Yinger has stated that pressure against a strong group makes it stronger by increasing the morale and heightening their sense of identity. However pressure against a weak group "demoralizes the members, heightens intragroup conflict, accentuates the tendencies toward self-hatred and programs of escape (most of them symbolic)."²⁶ But it is also true that groups can gain in strength as they begin to move out and exercise what strength they have. Thus we would propose that the First Mennonite Church align itself with other churches in the historic peace church tradition in giving their witness. Uniting together will give strength to the witness and encourage the churches in their mission.

It has been noted that the First Mennonite Church is losing strength as a sectarian religious ethnic group. There are two possible directions the church could move to continue its existence. If the decline in distinctive doctrine and witness continues, the church should seriously consider affiliating with one of the major denominations. There are several instances where churches have done this. The Mennonite Church in Langnau, Switzerland, has affiliated with the Reformed Church while it has

²⁶J. Milton Yinger, Sociology Looks at Religion (New York: Macmillan, 1961), p. 99.

retain its relationship to the other Mennonite Churches. Here in America the Waldensian Church of Valdese, North Carolina, has become the Waldensian Presbyterian Church. By such an affiliation these smaller churches are gaining support from larger and stronger churches while maintaining some individuality and historic identity. Such a proposal should not be brushed aside lightly in this age of ecumenical cooperation.

However, if the First Mennonite Church desires to give its witness as a sectarian church, which it does at the present time, it will need to identify itself more clearly in the eyes of the community as a church that desires to become a specifically religious group that is open to all persons who desire to give the type of witness the Mennonites have to offer. There is no question about the possibility of sectarian groups continuing within an urban setting. Recent studies have shown that groups that emphasize primary-type relationships and sectarian characteristics are far more resistant and durable in urban settings than theorists had ever imagined they could.²⁷ Lenski comments about the value of distinctiveness for the continuance of sect groups. He says, "It is not always the similarity with a person's traditional or individual thought but frequently differences from it which prove to be the attraction of the 'sectarian' community for him."²⁸ By giving a forthright witness to the Christian gospel

²⁷Wach, Op. Cit., p. 198.

²⁸Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor (New York: Doubleday, 1961), p. 10.

as it perceives it, the First Mennonite Church would be in a stronger position to continue its witness as an established sect.

The mission of the First Mennonite Church has been seen as two dimensional: to itself and to the world in which it exists. These two dimensions are intimately united and each depends heavily upon the other. Without the inspiration and depth of meaningful worship and study the work in the world can become drudgery and disappointing. Without a vital ministry in the world worship will become insipid and deadening. Together they become the vital life-giving activities that make existence purposeful and meaningful under the direction of the spirit of God.

III. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have presented a normative statement on the nature and mission of the Church. The Church was defined as a Christian community existing to fulfill the purpose of God as manifested in creation. The Church was seen as fulfilling this purpose by living in the world for the sake of the world. Its stance in the world is to be that of a servant.

In the second section we have sought to suggest ways in which the First Mennonite Church of Upland might become a servant church. Its mission was described as having two dimensions. The first was to its own life and included such activities as worship, study, dialogue and fellowship. The second dimension was to the surrounding community and its mission there consists of evangel-

ism, service and the peace witness. The First Mennonite Church has a vital role that it can fulfill at the present time if it will seek ways in which its mission to itself and to the community can be united. The mission to the community has been absent to a large extent. The church is now organized that this area of its mission can begin to develop and give purpose to its continued existence.

One limitation of this study is that no attempt has been made to survey the needs of the community in which the church lives. This is a vital study that the church will now need to begin if it is to match its gifts with the needs of the world. Some of this may be done in cooperation with other churches but some will need to be done alone as the church seeks to minister to its immediate neighbors manifesting the love of God.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MEMBERS WITH NON-MENNONITE PARENTAGE

Name	Year Received	Baptized Received	Married to A Member	Prior Church
1. Anna (Rauscher) Eymann	1904	R	X	Episcopal
2. Emil Tischler	1908	B		Lutheran
3. Amanda (Goetsch) Tischler	1908	B		Lutheran
4. Albina (Farmer) Weber	1911	R	X	Methodist
5. Emma (Schwartzentruber) Hirschler	1911	R	X	Evangelical
6. Albert Roeben	1920	R	X	Lutheran
7. Hannah (Reed) Yoder	1920	R	X	Methodist
8. Luis Hammer	1921	B		
9. Lydia (Jenkins) Baumgartner	1921	B	X	
10. Ora Lee (Woods) Horsch	1922	B	X	
11. Viola (Stewart) Hirschler	1922	R	X	Nazarene
12. Mrs. Kate Robeson	1923	R		Nazarene
13. J. Ernest Cline	1924	B	X	Presbyterian
14. Earl Scritchfield	1926	R	X	Congregational
15. Minnie (Baker) Schmutz	1926	R	X	Methodist
16. Lydia (Musselman) Horsch	1926	R	X	Methodist
17. Marcus Cabe	1927	R	X	Methodist
18. Merrill M. Schwiethert	1927	R		
19. Lisa Riedel	1928	B		
20. Irvin Marlar	1929	B	X	

Name	Year Received	Baptized Received	Married to A Member	Prior Church
21. Paul Vernon Baird	1929	R	X	Baptist
22. Elmer Dycks	1929	R		Presbyterian
23. Mrs. Myrtle Rodgers	1931	R		
24. Eloise Rodgers	1931	R		
25. Freeda (Musselman) Schmidt	1930	R	X	Methodist
26. Genevive Jacobs	1933	B		
27. Berneta LeMaster	1933	R		
28. Homer Myers	1933	B		
29. Mrs. Elizabeth Myers	1933	R		Presbyterian
30. Mrs. Monroe Hess	1933	R	X	Methodist
31. Pauline Jacobs	1936	B		
32. Lillian Courtright	1936	B		
33. Paul Whyborn	1936	R		Community
34. Mrs. Paul Whyborn	1936	R		Community
35. Dorcas (Hendrick- son) Dettweiler	1937	R	X	Brethren
36. Helen Hendrickson	1937	R	X	Brethren
37. Evelyn L. Lee	1937	B		
38. Mary J. Orchard	1937	B		
39. Louise (Nordeman) Rees	1938	R		Evangelical
40. Andrew Duncan	1938	R		
41. Woodrow Holly	1938	R	X	Brethren
42. Lucy Baird	1939	R		Baptist
43. Lawrence F. Delk	1939	R	X	Baptist
44. Bill Orchard	1939	B		
45. Roy Duque	1940	B		
46. Mrs. Roy Duque	1940	B		
47. Robert Orchard	1940	B		

Name	Year Received	Baptized Received	Married to A Member	Prior Church
48. Celesta Davidson	1940	R		Presbyterian
49. Doris (Hollingshad) Ruth	1941	B	X	
50. LaRae Dick	1942	R	X	Church of Christ
51. Joy Orchard	1942	R		
52. L. Fern Oswald	1944	R		
53. Franklin Oswald	1944	R		
54. Mrs. Franklin Oswald	1944	R		
55. Marguerite (Pfister) Johnson	1944	B		
56. Juanita Cline	1945	B		
57. Bessie Cline	1945	B		
58. Joseph Faulkner	1946	B	X	
59. Richard Holbrook	1946	B	X	
60. Elizabeth (Hamilton) Brandt	1946	B	X	
61. Walter Mertz	1946	R	X	Christian
62. Marjorie (Faulkner) Rodriguez	1946	B		
63. Lois Jean Barns	1946	B		
64. Stanley Glen Teague	1947	B	X	
65. Virginia (Wether- bee) Habegger	1947	R	X	Christian
66. Dorothy (Lewis) Lichti	1947	R	X	
67. Terry Grimmesey	1948	B	X	
68. Leon Smith	1948	B		
69. Jean (Muir) Cabe	1949	R	X	
70. Herbert Rutemann	1950	R		Lutheran
71. Mrs. Alida (Johanna) Rutemann	1950	R		Lutheran
72. Wilmer B. Klinger	1950	R	X	Presbyterian

Name	Year Received	Baptized Received	Married to A Member	Prior Church
73. Dolores (Reynolds) Evers	1951	B	X	Presbyterian
74. Jack McCarter	1951	R		
75. Mrs. Kathleen Neuenschwander	1951	B	X	
76. Dorothy Kinnison	1952	B		Methodist
77. Pearl Hadley	1952	R		
78. Nathaniel Cross	1953	R		
79. Mrs. Nathaniel Cross	1953	R		Lutheran
80. Clifford Kinnison	1953	B		
81. Ruth (Leete) Kinnison	1953	B		
82. Dominico Cantele	1954	R		Lutheran
83. Geraldine Cantele	1954	R		Lutheran
84. Travis Worsham	1954	B	X	Baptist
85. Rupard Hinton	1955	R	X	
86. Susan Smith	1955	B		
87. M. Henry Barber	1956	B	X	
88. Clarence Dowding	1956	B	X	
89. Patricia (Hendricks) Lichti	1956	B	X	
90. Alvilda (Orman) Landis	1957	R		Methodist
91. Walter Du Pre	1958	R		
92. Charlotte (Blanchard) Schmutz	1959	R	X	
93. Adrienne (Howe) Brandt	1960	B	X	
94. James Ruud	1960	B	X	
95. Billie (Nichols) Oswald	1960	R	X	
96. Elizabeth Payne	1960	B		Evangelical Reformed
97. Walborg Du Pre	1960	R	X	

Name	Year Received	Baptized Received	Married to A Member	Prior Church
98. Bert Kuehnle	1961	R		
99. Ruth (Baughey) Kuehnle	1961	R		
100. Faye (Hadley) Gregg	1962	R		
101. Leona (McCarty) Collins	1962	R	X	Baptist
102. Henny Vander Zwaag	1963	R		Dutch Reformed
103. Bruce Wilson	1963	R		Baptist
104. Delia Gene (Pate) Wilson	1963	R		Baptist
105. Malcolm Gable	1965	B		Lutheran
106. Frieda (Schenkel) Gable	1965	B		Presbyterian
107. Catherine (Krueger) Lovell	1965	R		
108. Linda Mayo	1966	B		
109. Elizabeth Regier	1966	B	X	

APPENDIX B

THE PASTORS AND THE YEARS THEY SERVED

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Michael M. Horsch | January, 1903 - April, 1915 |
| 2. Anthony S. Shelly | September, 1915 - May, 1918 |
| 3. Michael M. Horsch | June, 1918 - April, 1927 |
| 4. Lester Hostetler | October, 1927 - April, 1929 |
| 5. Andrew J.
Neuenschwander | September, 1929 - August, 1933 |
| 6. Lester Hostetler | October, 1933 - July, 1941 |
| 7. Earl Salzman | September, 1941 - June, 1951 |
| 8. Reynold Weinbrenner | June, 1951 - September, 1952 |
| 9. Menno Niswander | September, 1952 - April, 1953 |
| 10. Paul Goering | July, 1953 - December, 1960 |
| 11. Lester Hostetler | January, 1961 - April, 1961 |
| 12. LaVerne Rutschman | June, 1961 - October, 1961 |
| 13. Jesse N. Smucker | November, 1961 - July, 1962 |
| 14. David L. Habegger | September, 1962 - |

APPENDIX C

THE DEACONS AND NUMBER OF YEARS SERVED

1. Henry Rees	7	22. John Rahn	4
2. Wilhelm Harms	1	23. Fred Yoder	6
3. Heinrich Schmutz	11	24. Calvin Niswander	4
4. Louis M. Ledig	3	25. Joel Bachman	4
5. Daniel S. Krehbiel	9	26. Levi Hirschler	9
6. *Jacob J. Voth	12	27. Harley Evers	4
7. Peter J. Schmidt	9	28. Fred Janzen	3
8. John A. Hiebert	3	29. Tressler C. Boshart	2
9. Adolph J. Ledig	7	30. *Leonard Wiebe	1
10. Edward H. Haury	3	31. Albert Schmutz	7
11. *John K. Lichti	9	32. *Gordon Kaufman	2
12. Arnold Hostetler	6	33. Walter Mertz	2
13. *Alfred Wiebe	13	34. Rupard Hinton	2
14. *John C. Mehl	6	35. *David Eitzen	4
15. C. U. Widmer	3	36. Helen Simpkinson	2
16. Wilhelm F. Dettweiler	11	37. Emil Schmutz	5
17. Joseph S. Boshart	10	38. Jacob Brandt	4
18. Henry Reimer	7	39. Olin Habegger	3
19. Kornelius Siemens	3	40. Chris Krehbiel	2
20. Abraham K. Toews	4	41. Nettie Cooley	1
21. Luke Horsch	8	*Ordained Ministers	

APPENDIX D

THE CHAIRMEN OF THE CHURCH AND YEARS IN OFFICE

1.	Rev. Michael M. Horsch	1903 - 1914
2.	Rev. Jacob J. Voth	1915
3.	Rev. Anthony S. Shelly	1916
4.	Rev. Jacob J. Voth	1917
5.	Edward H. Haury	1918 - 1920
6.	Rev. John C. Mehl	1921 - 1927
7.	Luke J. Horsch	1928 - 1937
8.	Paul Schowalter	1938 - 1950
9.	Fred Yoder	1951 - 1952
10.	Paul Schowalter	1953 - 1954
11.	Fred Yoder	1955 - 1956
12.	Herman Rempel	1957 - 1961
13.	James Evers	1962
14.	David Eitzen	1963 - 1965
15.	Herman Rempel	1966

APPENDIX E

FOUR MODELS OF THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

The Church as it has existed for nearly two thousand years has seen its mission in a variety of ways. The age in which men lived, the country, the culture and world outlook have all had a determining influence upon this. We believe that the Spirit of God was moving within and upon the Church through these forces to help men to be effective in their day.

Today we find a variety of groups calling themselves churches. They have many things in common. They all meet on Sunday morning--usually between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon--at which time they sing hymns, read from the Bible, listen to a sermon by their pastor, and give money for special projects. They also meet by age groups for about an hour to study the Bible and relate it to their lives. While all of these things are in common, yet the churches vary greatly in what they believe to be the mission of the Church. This is to be seen in the type of worship service in which the church engages, the causes for which their money is given, and the special programs they promote.

Below we have four models or images of the Church. These are given to help us determine what might be the predominating focus of our church. We can readily agree that among the members

of the church we will find different personal emphases. But the purpose of this meeting is to determine the kind of church we are as a group. We do not have to deal with the question of what we should be. Let us look at where we are now. Once we have become sufficiently clear about where we are, we can then determine if we want to change the direction in which we would like to go, and how we might make the change.

I. THE CHURCH FOCUSED CHURCH

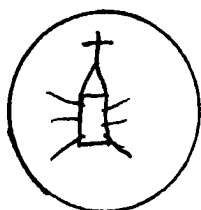
The Church is seen as the mystical body of Christ. It is composed of persons who have been united with Christ. This relation to Christ is acknowledged and experienced as one participates in the sacraments and listens to the preaching of the Word. The Church is seen as a continuing body, coming from the past into the present from the Church established by Christ. The Church is seen to exist wherever the sacraments are administered and the Word is preached. Worship is thus a central activity of the Church. Worship is looked upon as a way of serving God.

The central figure in such a Church is the minister who represents the on-goingness of the Church as he administers the sacraments and preaches the Word. The laity are also considered to have a ministry, but their ministry is largely living as Christians in the world. The primary duty of the Church is said to be the Church. Its mission is to be true to its heritage, to fulfill its own goals as they have been historically received.

The prime duty of the Church is not to impress, nor even to save men, but to confess Jesus Christ as the Savior and Lord of all men. If the world considers the life of the Church irrelevant, this is no cause for alarm, for the Church has a divine mission and it is not to be swayed by the judgment of the world.

The Church does not become directly involved with the social problems of the world. It sees itself more as a mediator between forces that are oppressing men. It does not want to be a means, an asset, to any group. It sees the real need of men to be the solution of his moral problem, which means dealing with his guilt. The ultimate goal of the Church is to bring persons into the Church through an acceptance of the work of Christ. As members of the Church they then participate in the major work of the Church, worship.

Diagram and Summary



The Church is a spiritual body that takes on institutional forms. In this form the organization and its ministries take on vital importance. People gain identity as members of the Church.

II. PERSON FOCUSED CHURCH

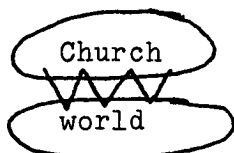
The primary concern of the person focused Church is that individuals be saved by a personal relation to Christ. The purpose of the worship service and other activities of the Church is to get men and women to receive salvation. It sees the world and the Church as sharply divided with the two having no vital relationship. Christians have been saved from the world.

Communion is primarily viewed as a remembrance of the act by which God saved men.

Preaching has a high place in the function of the Church in that the minister is considered primarily as a proclaimer or evangelist. The principle purpose of Bible study, Sunday School, prayer meetings, and other gatherings of the church is either to prepare persons for witnessing or to witness to those who have not accepted Christ. The members of the Church see it to be their duty to lead men to Christ or to bring them to the preaching service where they will hear the Gospel.

The Church's interest in social problems is primarily with those of a personal nature, such as drinking, smoking, dancing, and pornography. It keeps out of politics for the most part, except where personal morals are involved. The benevolence giving of the church goes primarily for mission work, i.e., work that holds evangelism as the main goal.

Diagram and Summary



The Church and the world are separate. Members go into the world to "save" persons for eternal life.

III. THE FAITHFUL COMMUNITY

The Church is seen as consisting of members who have been gathered from society into a new social order created by Christ. Entrance into the community is by a mature and voluntary act of the candidate in which they pledge to obey Christ in thorough-

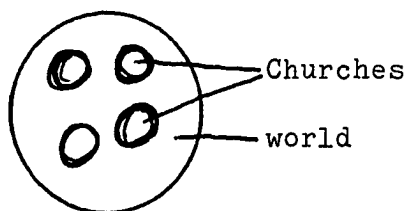
going discipleship. Discipleship means bringing one's whole outward life and social relationships under the radical Lordship of Christ. The Great Commission is seen as binding upon all members, and evangelism is the confrontation of unbelievers with Christ and his call to discipleship.

Jesus is seen as both Savior and Lord. Thus members of the Church are to interpret the Sermon on the Mount quite literally and obey all the injunctions. The norm for all relationships between men is absolute love. This means that persons see the welfare of other persons as their own and relate to them as persons loved by God. Nonresistance to the enemy is stressed and physical violence is fully rejected. This means nonparticipation in warfare or the taking of human life for any reason.

Members of the church are to emphasize the primacy of the authority of Christ over government leading to civil disobedience in cases of conflict between the two.

Service to one's fellowmen is seen as important as evangelism. Worship is a corporate act in which the congregation receives its motivation and direction from Christ, the head of the Church.

Diagram and Summary



The Church exists as "colonies of heaven" within the world. It exists in the world and seeks to redeem the world into a strong fellowship.

IV. THE WORLD FOCUSED CHURCH

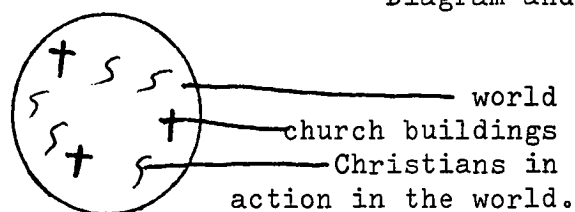
The Church is seen as taking form in and existing for the world. Its life together, as manifested in worship and study, is to help members think about the meaning of life and to prepare them for effective service in the world. The minister is to be viewed as a player-coach. He is with the members in the world as a theological specialist who helps equip them for their witness and servanthood in the world, and he participates with them in the work. The ministry of the Church is fulfilled by its members in the world.

In the world focused Church there is a recognition that God's gracious work is for all mankind. There is no sharp distinction between the Church and the world. Rather there is a recognition that persons outside the organization can be authentically "Christian" in their concern for mankind.

The work of the world focused Church is not so much work for the world, such as through social agencies or in social action. Rather it seeks to redeem the world itself by helping men to find the best solution to the problems of men in the world. The Church is forward looking and sees itself as responsible for the future which they are called to create. The Biblical events are seen as examples through which the ultimate meaning of our experiences are seen. But the concern is not primarily with what happened in the past but with the relation of the present to the future.

The world focused Church is open to discover new forms of the Church. It does not see the present institutions as the inevitable way in which the Church will function. While worship, ritual and Bible study are parts of the Church's life, yet they may take place in a variety of places and in a variety of forms. Since it is not called upon to perpetuate a particular institution it is free to discover its way and relate to the future.

Diagram and Summary



The Church is seen as a force moving within the world, taking shape according to the needs that arise.

APPENDIX F
MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS 1933-1966

Year	Membership at First of Year	Gain	Loss
1933	297		
1934	307	10	
1935	317	10	
1936	317		
1937	334 (Approximately 85 are non-resident or inactive.)	17	
1938	338	4	
1939	354	16	
1940	355	1	
1941	350		5
1942	350		
1943	343		7
1944	343		
1945	349	6	
1946	358	9	
1947	358		
1948	362	4	
1949	352		10
1950	350		2
1951	337		13
1952	325		12

Year	Membership at First of Year	Gain	Loss
1953	290		35
1954	285		5
1955	288	3	
1956	263		25
1957	259		4
1958	250		9
1959	233		17
1960	223		10
1961	229	6	
1962	231	2	
1963	235	4	
1964	230		5
1965	221		9
1966	230	9	

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